DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 126 367 CE 007 698

AUTHOR Niemi, John A.
TITLE Mass Media: A Cornucopia of Ideas for Adult Educators.
PUB DATE 72
NOTE 69p.; Not available in hard copy due to poor reproducibility of parts of the original

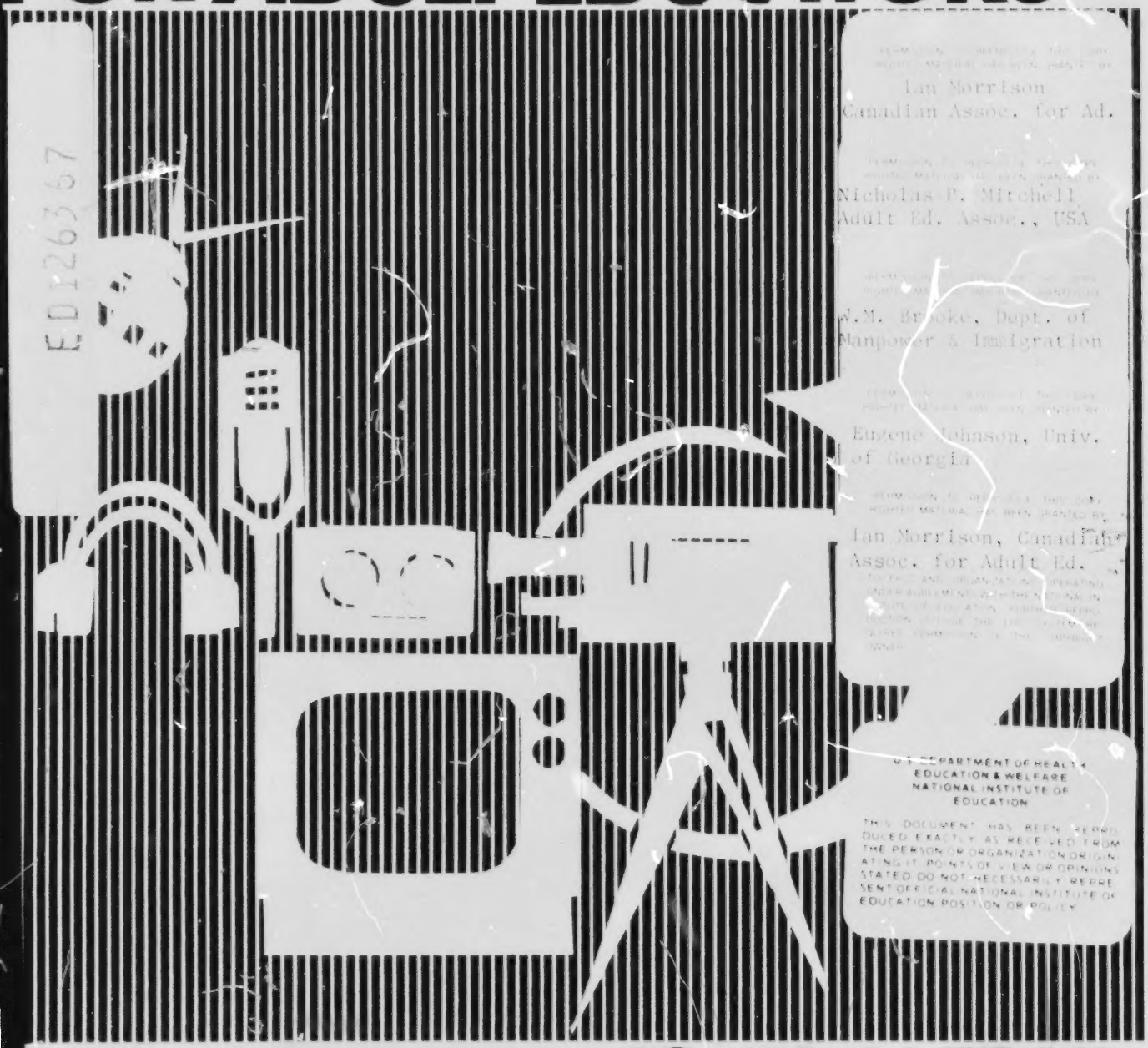
EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 Plus Postage. HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Adult Education; Adult Learning; Anthologies; Cable Television; Citizen Participation; Community Problems; Continuous Learning; Educational Radio; *Educational Strategies; Educational Television; Instructional Films; *Instructional Media; Listening Groups; *Mass Media; Program Evaluation

ABSTRACT

The collection of readings deals with some important developments affecting the use of the mass media in adult education. These include cablecasting as a means of urging citizens to become involved in community problems, films as spurs to social action, and television programs that employ the soap opera format for educational ends. Also presented in the collection are suggestions for the future use of the mass media in adult education. These include the revival of radio listening groups, problems of visual literacy, and the need for more rigorous evaluation of ETV programs. Titles of the collection's five sections of readings are: (1) mass communication: its potential for adult learning; (2) adult learning via the media; (3) adult education via mass media; (4) evaluation of programs; and (5) new vistas. The collection was compiled for use in graduate level programs for adult educators. (Author/AJ)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

MASS MEDIA: A CORNUCOPIA OF IDEAS FOR ADULT EDUCATORS



ED126367

Ian Morrison
Canadian Assoc. for Ad.

Nicholas P. Mitchell
Adult Ed. Assoc., USA

W.M. Brooke, Dept. of Manpower & Immigration

Eugene Johnson, Univ. of Georgia

Ian Morrison, Canadian Assoc. for Adult Ed.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

JOHN A. NIEMI

PREFACE

This collection of readings has been designed for graduate students, to acquaint these potential adult educators with some important developments affecting the use of the mass media in adult education. These include Cablecasting as a means of urging citizens to become involved in community problems, films as spurs to social action, and television programs that employ the soap opera format for educational ends. Also presented in this collection are suggestions for the future use of the mass media in adult education. These include the revival of radio listening groups, problems of visual literacy, and the need for more rigorous evaluation of ETV programs.

The collection is by no means complete. Other articles will be added on the use of satellites and video cassettes and on the Open University in Britain. The collection is being submitted to you for your evaluation and comments. With your help, I hope eventually to compile a book that will give to adult educators a better understanding of the mass media as a tool in their profession. In your evaluation, you might like to comment on such things as the format, i.e., the titles of categories under which the articles are grouped and whether categories should be added, deleted, or changed in some way. Or, you might indicate articles which seem to you to be of particular value to adult educators.

CONTENTS.

I. MASS COMMUNICATION: ITS POTENTIAL FOR ADULT LEARNING

"Lifelong Learning: Does TV Have A Part?" Educational Broadcasting, January-February, 1973.

"Lesson from A Small Soldier." Adult Leadership, December, 1970.

"Television and the Trail of '98." Educational Broadcasting, October, 1971.

"Communicating with the So-Called Disadvantaged: Can We Find A Common Ground?" BTSD Review, May, 1973.

"Visual Literacy: Understanding Media in Depth." Educational Broadcasting, May/June, 1972.

II. ADULT LEARNING VIA THE MEDIA

"Sir Kenneth Clark: Scholar? Entertainer? Adult Educator?" Educational Broadcasting, November, 1971.

"Henry and Elizabeth: History via the Tube." Educational Broadcasting, March, 1972.

III. ADULT EDUCATION VIA MASS MEDIA

A. Radio

"'Crossroad in Time': The Story of the Athabascan Indians." Educational Broadcasting, September, 1971.

"Reviving Radio Listening Groups as Catalysts for Social Action." Continuous Learning, November-December, 1971.

"The RAVEN Brings Tidings." Educational/Instructional Broadcasting, April, 1971. (With Adrian Blunt.)

B. Television

"Canada: Into the 'Brotherhood' of Anik." Educational/Instructional Broadcasting, October, 1970.

"TEVEC & Project Multi-Media." Educational Broadcasting, July-August, 1973.

Continued ...

"Public TV: Educational Gap?" Educational Broadcasting, March-April, 1973.

"...On Sesame Street for Adults" ("Sesame Street for Adults -- Why Not?"). Educational/Instructional Broadcasting, May, 1971.

"The Soap Opera-- A Viable Format for Adult Education via TV." Educational Broadcasting, November-December, 1972.

C. CATV

"Cablecasting: Involving the Community." Educational/Instructional Broadcasting, December, 1970.

"The Davey Report: Whither Cablecasting?" Educational/Instructional Broadcasting, March, 1971.

"Vancouver's Channel 10: Creating a Community Identity." Educational Broadcasting, January-February, 1972.

"Skid Row '71: Ripples from a Pebble." Educational Broadcasting, June, 1971.

"Greenwich Cablevision: A British Experiment in Cablecasting." Educational Broadcasting, July-August, 1972.

IV. EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS

"Dilemma in the 'Cool' Medium: ETV's Need for Evaluation." Educational/Instructional Broadcasting, October, 1969.

"Television: A Viable Channel for Educating Adults in Culturally Different Poverty Groups?--A Literature Review." Mass Media/Adult Education, April-May, 1971. (With Darrell Anderson.)

V. NEW VISTAS

"The Open University: What Influence on North America?" Educational Broadcasting, September/October, 1973. p.33.

"...'On Hot Line'" ("A Radio Equation: Adult Education Programming + 'Hot Line' = Social Action"). Educational/Instructional Broadcasting, May, 1971.

"Saskatchewan New Start--Life Skills and VTR." Educational Broadcasting, December, 1971.

"Eskimos and Film--The Making of a Position Paper." Educational Broadcasting, September-October, 1972.

"Video Cassettes and Software: Two Strategies." Educational Broadcasting, March-June 1973.

I. MASS COMMUNICATION: ITS POTENTIAL FOR ADULT LEARNING

Lifelong learning: Does TV have a part?

The author of *Future Shock* reminds us that our present problems are going to proliferate and deepen in intensity, and that people are going to have to be prepared to cope with them. They consist of major social ills like pollution, violence and poverty, and these are aggravated in people's minds by the staggering weight of information overload transmitted via the media. In addition, many individuals are already finding themselves ill-equipped for the increased leisure provided by the shorter work week and early retirement. Because lifelong "learning" holds out the promise of helping all of us to sort out and cope with our problems, it is vitally important that we gain a clear understanding of what is meant by the concept and what its implications are for TV programming.

What, first of all, do we mean by learning? This concept is generally thought of as a lasting change of behavior, the result of experience. The experience itself involves such things as gathering information and acquiring intellectual and social skills to use the information for whatever purpose the learner has in mind. Learning takes place both formally, as in the classroom, and informally in the societal setting, where regular TV programming plays a large part. Such learning is referred to by educators as "learning by chance," contrasted with "learning by design." The latter occurs when we deliberately create a situation to the end that an individual or group will learn new behaviors. Here we are reminded of such adult programs as Sunrise Semester and University of the Air and the youth-oriented Sesame Street.

To return to lifelong learning, briefly, this concept embraces both learning by chance and learning by design. It means, as Roby Kidd reports, learning through the life span, learning across the disciplines and learning as a search for truth to set us free.

What are the implications of lifelong learning for TV programming? Obviously, lifelong learning operates by both "chance" and "design," as the TV audience selects, often at random, programs from a diversity of offerings, e.g., newscasts, sports events, documentaries, soap operas and college level courses. Indeed, to many adults, TV constitutes their principal source of information, though they may not perceive the medium as such. The habit begins in youth. One rather staggering estimate made recently is that, by the time a child enters school, he has already spent more hours learning about the world from TV than he would spend in earning a college degree. Much of what he sees involves falsity in advertising, unethical behavior and violence, which has been shown to cause aggressive behavior in children – a dire portent for adult society. Surely both educator and broadcaster have a responsibility to recognize that TV is more than entertainment; that it is, in fact, an educational tool of incalculable power, whether operating by chance or design. Shouldn't both parties be using their influence to see that quality programs are available to assist viewers in achieving the positive goals of lifelong learning, as Roby Kidd has stated them?

by John A. Niemi

Accent on Social Philosophy

LESSON FROM A SMALL SOLDIER

Vancouver, B. C., Victoria Day, Monday, May 18, 1970.

With the rapid outburst, "Ah-Ah-Ah!" a jubilant five-year-old yelled, "I've got you, Alex!" As I approached the scene of action, little Alex, aged four or five, lay still in the dusty street, simulating death as the rest of the children went on with their game of *Soldier vs. Student.*

To an American teaching at a Canadian university, this scene came as a nauseating shock, especially since British Columbians were celebrating a holiday dear to their hearts—the birthday of Queen Victoria, who had presided over the once mighty British Empire. But whereas the older generation might have been reliving past glories, our small actors were recreating an event that will remain as a black mark upon American society—the Kent State shootings.

Of course, children have always acted out adult roles in their little world. The difference today is that their world has expanded enormously since the invention of the TV tube. They have become inhabitants of a "global village," ringside witnesses to the events of our time. As a result, our youth have mastered, at an early age, concepts that eluded, or partly eluded, previous generations. The Apollo flights alone explained some mysteries of gravity when illustrating the "thrust" required to hurl men into outer space, their weightless state on the moon, and the problems involved in returning them to earth.

While such advances in the cognitive domain are gratifying, we must deplore the concepts that are being stressed with respect to the affective domain. The high incidence of violent acts on TV, in news, cartoons, and films, has been well documented. How rare, by comparison, are programs like the amazingly successful "Sesame Street," with its emphasis on constructive and happy learning experiences for children.

What can we, as adult educators, do about the situation in which children like Alex find themselves? Once, children learned certain values almost entirely in the home, the school, and the church. Moreover, as a prominent educator recently pointed out, these institutions were mutually reinforcing, sharing common objectives and purposes. Now they are frequently at odds with each other. Psychologists and sociologists tell us of the breakdown of family life. The school, once the bedrock of our democratic society, is styled by some critics as an anachronism, clinging to nineteenth century philosophies and practices. And the church, an important institution in the founding of the new world, is accused of remaining aloof from contemporary problems, instead of giving leadership to the people.

It is, of course, hard to assess the degree to which TV hastened the decline of these influences. But there is no doubt concerning the pervasive influence of TV itself. The medium is largely controlled by the broadcasters and the advertisers who support the industry. These groups have continued to promote programs featuring violence and to pass them off as entertainment, with little regard for their effects upon young people. There is no one to act as a catalyst between these groups and the parents, teachers, clergy, and other adults concerned with the rearing of children. Here, it seems to me, is an opportunity—indeed a responsibility—for adult educators.

It may not be possible for us to work directly with parents or with the schools or the churches, but we could develop public affairs programs centering on such questions as these: What effect does the visual impact of TV violence have on our youth? What can be done through the home, the school, and the church to counter this influence? Or, more positively, what values should we be teaching to our young people through the home, the school, and the church? How can parents, teachers, and other adults who oppose violence on TV make their views known to broadcasters? Here, for example, the role of the adult educator would be that of bringing the adults and the broadcasters together at a public forum which could be televised. Using his knowledge of community organization and his skills in program planning, he might organize listening groups to react to the ideas presented at the forum. Another type of program would be similar to "The Advocates," allowing both sides of a particular issue to be aired and inviting audiences to respond. Further programs might consist of workshops.

Alex didn't die on Monday, May 18, 1970. No doubt his mock battle was soon forgotten—or was it? Will it be resumed when the TV screen lights up with another instance of stark violence? What is our responsibility?

Author, Dr. John A. Niemi, is Associate Professor of Adult Education, The University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada.

It is the function of the AEA Committee on Social Philosophy to focus attention on issues of meaning and value within our culture. Address mail to AEA Social Philosophy Committee, 150 Congress Street, Braintree, Mass. 02184.

Television and the Trail of '98

Recently, while on a visit to Alaska, I found myself sitting on the dusty floor of the Skagway City Hall, which dates from the famous Klondike Gold Rush of '98. Perhaps a few ghosts of that period were present as the people of Skagway, tourists, and others crowded into the Hall to meet an international commission of Americans and Canadians planning to establish a Klondike Gold Rush International Historical Park. Some of the excitement of those early days ran through the room as the group unveiled its plan to ride a helicopter next day to the summit of the perilous Chilkoot Trail, and showed a National Film Board of Canada documentary depicting the triumphs and the failures of the men who had blazed the Trail. The film consisted largely of old photographs ingeniously juxtaposed and explained in lively narrative style by Pierre Berton, the well-known Canadian author and television personality.

As I marveled at the technology that could lift these men effortlessly above the 35° angle slopes across which the early pioneers had struggled in ice and snow, I couldn't help pondering these questions: What would have been the impact of the Klondike Gold Rush had the television camera beamed the story to the world? Would the aura of romance and the heady sense of adventure been lost, or at least dimmed? The old photographs emphasized the comradeship, the courage, and the élan of the men who dared the Trail of '98. The modern television camera, with its pitiless, all-encompassing lens, would also have captured the harsh realities: the unending lines of men lugging up the slopes a ton of provisions each, 100 pounds at a time; the frustration of the men who gave up and sold their supplies at ten cents on the dollar; thousands of horses slipping off the narrow trails to perish in the gulches below. Television's immediacy, its on-the-scene reporting, would have heightened the impact.

Indeed, I thought, there is a parallel with the controversial Vietnam war. Not long ago, before the television age, war had aroused the same glory that we associate with the Klondike Gold Rush; the horrors of conflict were overshadowed and often reported late. As recently as World War Two (and certainly in World War One), this sense of romance had prevailed, celebrated in poem and song. But television effected a dramatic change. In Vietnam, the camera has instantly recorded the grim facts: anguished refugees carrying their wounded; GI's treading cautiously over unfamiliar terrain; a helicopter crashing in the jungle.

Much of the old romance of war has been lost, replaced by a sober assessment of its triumphs and its costs. At its best, television brings to many other happenings this balance, or perspective, so essential for educating the public. This function of television may well be its most important contribution to the modern scene. We need a public educated to appreciate the romance of great events while retaining a grasp of their stern realities. ■

by John A. Niemi

COMMUNICATING WITH THE SO-CALLED DISADVANTAGED -- CAN WE FIND A COMMON GROUND?

John A. Niemi

Adult Education Research Centre,
University of British Columbia

The term "disadvantaged" is frequently chosen to describe individuals or groups sharing certain socio-economic and social-psychological characteristics. The former include low incomes, limited education and limited job opportunities; the latter include close kinship and neighborhood ties and a "live for today" philosophy. However, "disadvantaged" has acquired pejorative connotations, setting individuals or groups apart as somehow inferior. For this reason, the term "culturally different" will be used with respect to poverty sub-cultures found in our North American society. Here, "culture" has its traditional meaning, referring to groups of people who share distinctive designs for living.[1,2] This group embraces both the rural poor and the urban poor. In the first category are individuals or families living on marginal land and Indians on reservations; in the second category are the rural poor who have migrated to the city and who often live in ghettos, and other ghetto-dwellers such as new immigrants, "old" immigrants who have never learned to speak English or French, and minority races such as Indians and negroes.

The obvious "apartness" of these culturally different groups from the dominant society is bound to cause problems of communication. In this paper, it is my purpose to focus on some of these problems, and then to draw implications for the adult educator. Hopefully, in doing so, it will be possible to find common ground on which to meet.

First, let us look at the concept of communication, which has its root in the Latin "communis," meaning "common." Fundamentally, the communication process involves an exchange of meaning between the sender (Encoder) of a message and the receiver (Decoder). This process does not, of course, refer to verbal transmissions alone, but includes non-verbal transmissions which may or may not be intentional, e.g., facial expressions, gestures, tone of voice. Schramm's model is pertinent here -- his Sender-Encoder-Signal-Decoder-Receiver pattern, with its dependence upon intersecting fields of experience.[3] In fact, the points of intersection, as the concept is applied to the dominant society and the culturally different groups, may be extremely limited. Hence, it seems more appropriate and more realistic to talk about different "cultural milieus." This term hints at perhaps the most important barrier to communica-

tion between these groups and the dominant society--the very different perceptions entertained of reality, and the stereotypes and assumptions of both sides. An illustration is this comment by a Mississippi black man talking with Harvard psychiatrist Robert Coles:

> "The people who help us, we're grateful to them, but I wish they wouldn't keep telling us how sorry they are for us, how bad we have it. And I wish their eyes wouldn't pop out every time they see we're not crying all day long and running wild or something. The other day a white fellow, he said how wonderful my house is, and how good we get along together, and how impressed he was by it all. I wanted to say, "Don't be giving us that kind of compliment, because it shows on you what you don't know about us."[4]

Notice how negative is the perception of the white man, and how deeply the negro resents the interpretation placed upon his life style.

In three separate studies, Skene, Derbyshire and Rogers set out to identify personality traits common to culturally different groups and to describe relationships between them and the dominant society. Almost all traits listed in the studies are negative: these people are said to be boisterous, physically aggressive, reticent, fatalistic, suspicious, etc.[5] In studying the findings, one can hardly avoid the conclusion that they mirror the researchers' own biases arising from their particular perceptions of reality.

Likewise, an account by Johnie Scott, the first negro from Watts to attend Harvard, reveals the different "realities" arising from different cultural milieus and the resulting conflicts and communication problems. After his failure at Harvard and his return to Watts, he wrote:

> "Watts appeared very strange to me when I returned. And yet as I walked through the projects, as I went by old houses, on the back streets, and as I described my Harvard experiences to my friends, I again became aware of the tremendous spiritual toll the ghetto exacts. I could now feel the hopelessness. I, in failing Harvard, had been ripped asunder from all my retreats from poverty, and for once I had to stand naked before my own fear. . .before the leering face of myself, an old man perched on a milk crate cackling at the young ladies."[6]

Finally, there is the study conducted at Mounds, Illinois, by Byuarm, who reports the failure of a community action program designed to bring negroes and whites together to discuss racial issues. Whereas the design of the study called for interaction between the races on an equal basis, a superordinate-subordinate relationship persisted, with the negroes assuming the lesser role. The cleavage made it impossible for informal channels of communication to operate or for formal

channels to open up for exchanges of opinion and information on racial issues.[7]

What are the bases of the different perceptions of reality? Some have already been touched upon--different value systems and attitudes springing from social, economic and other forces operating in the environment. *Adult Education and the Disadvantaged Adult* presents many studies that substantiate these relationships. Although the diversity of the groups makes it difficult to generalize, it has been found that many uphold value systems that are clearly at variance with those of the dominant society. Because they see no future that differs significantly from the present, these groups tend to be pragmatic and to lean toward "present" orientation or rewards, whereas the dominant society is more concerned with the future. Also, as a response to discrimination by the dominant society, many groups reject, explicitly or implicitly, its institutional structures in favor of "small personal kinship, locality or friendship groups."[8]

Other impediments to communication arise from differences in language; the most obvious involves the non English speaking members of culturally different groups. And even where such persons have attempted to learn English, there exist "interferences" from their native language. For example, among a group of Finnish-Canadians, it was found that many had evolved a "slang" which is a curious combination of English sounds approached through Finnish rules of pronunciation. "Finglish," as it is known in the United States, produces such words as "hospitalli" for "hospital" and "co-operativii" for "co-operative."[9] In addition, there are language problems attributable to regional or local dialects, as exemplified by certain expressions found to be common in Appalachia: a bein (being able); out he goes a playin (go out and play); shes fixin (while she fixed).[10]

Another communication problem is with the large group commonly called the "hard-core poor." Their language, like other languages, has at times been maligned by the dominant society as interior, substandard, etc. But such appellations overlook the value of the language within the group itself. There, it is a viable form of communication, described by Bernstein as having "a simplicity and directness of expression, emotionally virile, pithy, and powerful, with a metaphoric range of considerable force and appropriateness."[11] The language serves admirably the needs of the group for an obvious reason--Encoder and Decoder share the same cultural milieu. But, outside that milieu, and especially in the context of the dominant society, the language of the hard-core poor may suffer severe limitations. Notably, verbal facility is restricted, a condition that often causes these people to rely significantly on non-verbal cues in both giving and receiving messages. Thus, when messages are received from the dominant society, the hard-core

poor will often pay more attention to actions than to words. As for giving messages, a study conducted at the University of Pittsburgh implies that certain features of the language used by this group render it almost incomprehensible to persons outside.[12] To complicate the situation, there is evidence that the language is sometimes deliberately contrived "to keep the outsider out."[13]

What are some of the difficulties? An important one is that the language is "a predominantly descriptive mode of abstraction, rather than an analytic one. . . ." and

> Meanings are embedded in local and time-bound settings. The meanings depend, for full understanding, on the authority and other social relationships of the communicants, as well as on their ages, sexes, and other personal characteristics, on the time and place in which they are spoken. . . .[14]

Moreover, many distinctive words have been formed by various means, becoming idioms not easily grasped by outsiders, for example,:

> *Agentive Substitution* . . . produced by substituting typical actions or functions of an actor for the actor himself, by the addition of -er (*baby*--crumb crusher, pea pusher; *door*--slammer; *tooth brush*--pearl pusher. . .
>
> *The use of words such as "job" and "man" as suffices* to construct new selections (e.g., *crying*--kleenex job; *hair*--comb job, grease job; *outwitted*--tank job. . .; *social worker*--job man; *neighborhood leader*--man man; *most respected or knowledgeable person*--down man. . .
>
> *Resultative Appellations* -- This group of words is produced by selecting an extreme result as a substitute for its cause (e.g., *angry*--smoking; *fight with a gun*--blast; *fight with a sharp instrument*--bleed. . .[15]

What are some implications of these communication problems for the adult educator who plans programs for culturally different groups? He must realize that his own background and training are likely to make him perceive reality differently from the adult learners. He could unwittingly look at their situation through the lens of his own middle class biases and assumptions and so misjudge their needs and expectations. To help avoid this pitfall, it is essential that the adult educator involve in the groups fully in the program planning process. Otherwise, he risks failure. Many programs have foundered in the past, because they have been based on the needs of the groups as perceived *not by them* but by persons in the dominant society. Programs have been traditionally based on minimal skills in reading, writing, and computation, instead of larger configurations offering choices from a wide array of life-styles.

One strategy that has been used successfully to determine the needs of culturally differ-

ent groups is film or VTR. To facilitate dialogue within a community, its members can, by these means, not only discern their problems more clearly but take a direct hand in seeking creative solutions. A good example is the project launched by the St. Jacques Citizens' Committee of Montreal. It is reported that:

> They went out into the streets and interviewed the people about their problems, in order to learn more about the neighborhood and to make people think about what could be done. Then an edited half-hour tape was used to analyze discussion at the beginning of a series of public meetings. The procedure was very effective; people plunged into the heart of the discussion, instead of being fearful about expressing themselves. The citizens also learned a lot about themselves by viewing themselves in action during meetings and discussions.[16]

The approach is similar to that advocated by Paulo Friere, whose concept of "conscientization" seems to me to represent what we often call "involvement" at its best:

> . . . the process in which men, not as recipients, act as knowing subjects, achieve a deepening awareness both of the socio-cultural reality which shapes their lives and of their capacity to transform that reality.[17]

Another implication arises from the immensely complicated nature of the language of the groups. The adult educator will err if he thinks that these languages are simple and easily mastered, because the people generally have a low level of education; or if he regards these languages as inferior and crude. Rather, he must respect them for their qualities of utility and force and even learn, if he can, to understand them. Such understanding of a man's language is a valuable key to a man's needs and hopes. At the same time, the perceptive adult educator will recognize the dilemma of individuals or groups who have only one "language" available to them. They lack the options of better educated persons who shift easily from colloquial language to more formal patterns as the occasion demands. The task, then, is one of educating members of the culturally different groups in the perception and use of the available options, in order to improve communication between them and the dominant society.

A third implication relates to the adult educator's strategy in making contact with the groups. Because of the often closed nature of these groups, he should probably not attempt to make head-on contact with them. Rather, as the University of Pittsburgh study put it, he ought to seek out "sophisticated, knowledgeable insiders" to assist him.[18] The use of insiders would be helpful at all stages of a program--planning, promotion, operation, and evaluation--to help overcome misunderstandings that go beyond the skill of the adult educator. He would be well advised, also, to

consider employing para-professionals or professionals drawn from the groups. In Alaska, for example, sponsors from the native community often become A.B.E. teachers, although they possess only a high school education. The obvious advantage is that these teachers actively share the "reality" of the people whom the adult educator wants to reach and so perceive the problems better than he could.

Other implications of the communication problems that have been discussed may be useful to the adult education who occupies the role of the teacher. He should have empathy with his students, including patience with their fears and a sincere regard for their value systems and modes of communication. In particular, he must be aware of the sensitivity of the learners to non-verbal cues and not betray shock or disapproval by facial expression or bodily movements. At least one research study has shown that teachers who appeared successful were those who could set aside their own value systems and accept the adult learner as a human being of considerable potential.[19] Additionally, the teacher should seek assistance from linguists when dealing with adult learners whose native language differs from that of the dominant society. Here, a contrastive analysis of the two languages, showing their similarities and differences relating to such things as vowel sounds, consonant sounds, and syntax should prove useful.

Concerning materials, the teacher should recognize the limitations of standardized or packaged items such as books or programs developed for radio or television. Such materials seldom meet the special needs of the adult learner, but tend to restrict him by imposing on him a "reality" not his own and a language that he does not understand. However, some materials could be usefully adapted by the teacher, and certainly they could furnish him with ideas for developing materials of his own. A variety of techniques should also be used to foster one-way and two-way communication between teacher and student and between student and student, so that all act as both Encoders and Decoders. Such techniques include lectures, discussion, role-playing, and field trips. A happy by-product of this approach would be the creation of an open, threat-free, classroom climate in which each one would feel free to express his needs, his anxieties, and his expectations.

In using television and film, the A.B.E. teacher must not assume that his students will learn readily from these media. It is a mistake to think that persons having low verbal facility will necessarily demonstrate a high degree of visual literacy. What is meant by this concept? Briefly, it means the ability to "discriminate and interpret the visual actions, objects and/or symbols, natural or man-made, that he encounters in

his environment."[20] Such skills include seeing relationships among ideas or events, whether these are presented in sequence or in flashback; discerning intricate relationships among characters; sorting out the multiple meanings contained in a visual message; distinguishing truth from falsity, especially in advertisements and political messages; perceiving implicit as well as explicit assumptions and value systems; and so on.

I began this paper by announcing that I would focus attention on some problems affecting culturally different groups in their communication with the dominant society and explore certain implications for the adult educator. The paper is by no means comprehensive, but it does perhaps highlight a few of the more pressing concerns. In closing, I can hardly do better than quote from Arkava's *Sociology for Impoverished Life Styles*:

> The general communications . . . approach is one that is based on the underlying assumption that confusion exists between individuals and social systems because they are not effectively communicating. The idea is that if people can see more correctly, communicate more adequately, and reason more effectively, they will be able to lay a realistic common basis for action and changing.[21]

REFERENCES

1. Bagdikian, Ben H. *In the Midst of Plenty: A New Report on the Poor in America*, Baltimore: 1966, p. 49.

2. Lewis, Oscar. "The Culture of Poverty." *The Scientific American*, October 1966, p. 19.

3. Schramm, Wilbur. "Procedures and Effects of Mass Communication," *In* Nelson B. Henry (editor), *Mass Media and Education*. Chicago, Illinois: NSSE, 1954, pp. 113-120.

4. "Breaking the American Stereotypes," *Time*, February 14, 1972, p. 48.

5. Anderson, Darrell, and Niemi, John A. *Adult Education and the Disadvantaged Adult*, Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Publications in Continuing Education and ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult Education, 1970, pp. 21-22.

6. Scott, Johnie. "How It Is --My Home Is Watts." *Harper's Magazine*, October 1966, p. 48.

7. Byuarm, S.W. "Community Action: A Case Study in Racial Cleavage," Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Illinois, 1962, pp. 58-60.

8. Anderson and Niemi, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-30.

9. Niemi, John A. "English for 'Old Canadians': The Finnish Project in British Columbia." *The English Quarterly*, Fall, 1972.

10. Qazilbash, A. Husain. "A Dialect Survey of the Appalachian Region." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Florida State University, 1971, pp. 313-359.

11. Bernstein, Basil. "Social Class and Linguistic Development: A Theory of Social Learning." *In* A.H. Halsey, Jean Floud and C. Arnold Anderson (editors), *Education, Economy and Society*, 1961, p. 308.

12. Anderson and Niemi, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

13. Cohen, Rosalie *et al.* "Implications for Culture Conflict from a Semantic Feature Analysis of the Lexicon of the Hard-Core." Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Learning Research and Development Center, Mimeo paper, 1967, p. 2.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

15. *Ibid.*, Appendix, pp. 1-2.

16. Henaut, Dorothy Todd. "The Media: Powerful Catalyst for Community Change." *In* John A. Niemi (editor), *Mass Media and Adult Education*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Educational Technology Publications, 1971, pp. 114-115.

17. Freire, Paulo. "Cultural Action and Conscientization." *Harvard Educational Review*, Vol. 40, No. 3, August 1970, p. 452.

18. Cohen, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

19. Barnes, Robert F. and Hendrickson, Andrew. *A Review of Appraisal of Literacy Materials and Programs*, Columbus, Ohio: The Ohio State Research Foundation, 1965, p. 95.

20. Debes, John L. "The Loom of Visual Literacy--An Overview." *In* Clarence M. Williams and John L. Debes (editors), *Proceedings of the First National Conference on Visual Literacy*, New York: Pitman Publishing Corporation, 1970, p. 14.

21. Arkava, Morton L. *A Sociology of Impoverished Life Styles*, Boulder, Colorado: Region VIII, Adult Basic Education Project at the University of Colorado, 1970, p. 74.

Visual Literacy: Understanding Media in Depth

In describing the adult literacy process, Paulo Freire emphasizes that "learning to read and write ought to be an opportunity for men to know what speaking the word really means: a human act implying reflection and action." Verbal literacy, then, goes far beyond the minimal skills of reading, writing and computation. Although the problems of verbal literacy have received intensive study, relatively little is known about *visual* literacy. Yet, it too is "a human act implying reflection and action" and demanding skills as complex as those involved in verbal literacy. Visual literacy is explained as follows in the *Proceedings of the First National Conference on Visual Literacy* in Rochester, N.Y., March 1969:

> Visual literacy refers to a group of vision competencies a human being can develop by seeing at the same time he has and integrates other sensory experiences. The development of these competencies is fundamental to normal human learning. When developed, they enable a visually literate person to discriminate and interpret the visible actions, objects, and/or symbols, natural or man-made, that he encounters in his environment. Through the creative use of these competencies, he is able to communicate with others. Through the appreciative use of these competencies, he is able to comprehend and enjoy the masterworks of visual communication.

We do not know how many North Americans are visually literate; but we do know that they spend considerable time watching TV and film, and we can be pretty sure that few have been instructed in critical viewing. How many, for example, know when they are being conned by subliminal messages, especially by what McLuhan calls "the unconscious depth-messages of ads"? How many are aware of underlying assumptions not made explicit, like the assumption in one recent film that violence is necessary and satisfying to humans? Or, how many notice the kind of visual aid selected to reinforce or disparage certain attitudes or values? On a technical level, do viewers understand how close-ups, long shots and flashbacks assist the act of communication?

It must be remembered that most viewers, especially older people, are accustomed to linear presentations, whether in the form of lectures, documentaries or soap operas. Through learning to read, these people have mastered skills that serve them well in watching films or TV. The most notable are the ability to see relationships in a sequence of ideas or events and the ability to discern intricate relationships among characters. However, regular TV programs with their news, advertising and entertainment, are moving away from the old linear model. In their place we have the multimedia model bombarding our senses with patterns of motion and sound, susceptible to many interpretations. Also, the whole thrust of modern film-making is toward kaleidoscopes of diffused images and meanings, with little spoken or written language. How will viewers react – with delighted comprehension or with confusion? We cannot continue to assume that they will somehow develop visual literacy – enabling them to sort out multiple meanings – to distinguish truth from falsity and to perceive implied assumptions and value systems. By creating more critical viewers, visual literacy can reduce the possibility that they will be manipulated by the media. Such instruction calls for systematic planning. Isn't it time we began offering courses in in-depth analysis of the media?

by John A. Niemi

II. ADULT LEARNING VIA THE MEDIA

SIR KENNETH CLARK: SCHOLAR? ENTERTAINER? ADULT EDUCATOR?

Upon hearing that Sir Kenneth Clark's film series "Civilisation" would appear on CBC in Canada and through the Public Broadcasting Service in the United States, I purchased copies of Clarks's books *Civilisation: A Personal View* and *A Guide to Civilisation* by the National Gallery of Art. From the BBC publication *The Listener*, I had gleaned information about Clark's role as a scholar and an entertainer (in the best sense of the word). Because this series was clearly directed to an adult audience, I found myself watching from the perspective of an adult educator interested in the mass media.

The task of integrating and condensing into thirteen programs a staggering volume of information about the culture of Western Europe made inevitable Clark's choice of the lecture technique. But Clark's lecture differed markedly from the usual television lecture directed to adults. Instead of merely dispensing information, Clark sweeps the viewer along with him. Together, they explore an ancient French abbey, the fresh English countryside, the frescoes of St. Peter's in Rome, and other hallowed places. How does he do it? By melding his wisdom and knowledge with the technical skill of the BBC television personnel. According to Peter Quennell (*The Saturday Review*, August 28, 1971), Clark early recognized the potential of television for the "Civilisation" series. The resulting blend of color, music and other sounds, imagery, and narration has proved irresistible to large audiences.

Clark unerringly hit upon some important principles of adult learning. One has already been mentioned: the planning of vivid, variegated experiences which involve the viewer. Another principle is that of establishing rapport with him. Clark does so through an easy, informal manner of speech and dress. He greets the viewer directly, often in everyday language salted with humor. He asks questions like "What is civilisation?" adding "I don't know. I can't define it in abstract terms -- yet. But I think I can recognise it when I see it. . . ." A third principle relates to Clark's organization of his subject matter: he justifies his interpretations. For example, he cites Constable's painting "Willows by a Stream" and some of Wordsworth's poems to illustrate the naivete of the "cult of simplicity." Finally, he knows the importance of relating the old and the new, the past and the present; he tells us that medieval and Renaissance architecture surpassed our own because "the architects were artists."

However, as an adult learning experience, "Civilisation" has one drawback. The amount of information presented within each 50-minute program is overwhelming; Clark regularly surveys more than forty works of art. For the viewer to assimilate the material, it would be preferable to organize the series into smaller "packages," perhaps 26 programs of 25 minutes duration. Nevertheless, I, like many others, am indebted to Sir Kenneth Clark for his gentle, urbane, supremely knowledgeable interpretation of human achievements. His transforming touch helps us to appreciate anew the power of television as an educational medium.

by John A. Niemi

Henry and Elizabeth: History Via the Tube

Are the recent B.B.C. programs centering on British history prodding North Americans to think about new approaches to the design of educational programs for TV? Some will argue that the two series "The Six Wives of Henry VIII" and "Elizabeth" are strictly entertainment and that any "learning" happens by chance, not design. In fact, the two series display some of the best features of both entertainment and education.

Although audiences are apparently captivated by the red-headed, hot-tempered Tudor monarchs Henry and his daughter Elizabeth, the series do more than merely exploit their foibles and their amorous adventures. Students of politics and others can observe with fascination the absolute power which these monarchs wielded, in startling contrast to the restraints placed upon the present Queen. Yet, as the series makes clear, until the Tudor monarchs actually ascended the throne, their lives were often in danger from a legion of conspirators grasping at power for themselves. For these monarchs, the "games" they had to play in the waiting period constituted a kind of apprenticeship in statecraft. Elizabeth grew in political astuteness in the precarious years when her half-sister Mary held the throne and plotters threatened Elizabeth's life. Later, she deftly played her suitors off against each other, to maintain the balance of power and secure England's position. Likewise, Henry's first matrimonial venture had political ends; his marriage to Catherine of Aragon cemented England and Spain in their alliance against France.

Both series aptly illustrate the "great man" theory of history – that significant events are frequently born of conflicts between personal desires and political goals. Such a theory, serving as the foundation of a TV series, forecasts sure-fire entertainment, as producers know. In our infinitely lesser spheres, many of us have faced similar conflicts, and thus can identify with the protagonists. But to cling too narrowly to this theory is, of course, to leave out other considerations and risk distorting reality. It is here that the B.B.C. perhaps sells education short. Neither series tells us much about the social history of the times, especially the impact upon the common people of the political events dramatized so vividly. In the series focussing on Henry, we find little concerning the religious controversy that rocked the age, with far-reaching consequences. Also, the highly personal nature of the series biases us concerning Henry's character in particular. His lechery and his obsession with having a son to succeed him are emphasized; his skill at statecraft barely hinted at.

Yet, even with these limitations, most educators would agree that the series are valuable both as supplements for persons already acquainted with Tudor history, and as stimuli to others to seek more information. The series certainly portray aspects of Henry's and Elizabeth's characters with fidelity, bringing us insights into the function of the monarchy in those days, and capturing much of the color and vibrancy of Tudor England, especially in Elizabeth's time.

by John A. Nienl

III. ADULT EDUCATION VIA MASS MEDIA

"Crossroad in Time": The Story of the Athabascan Indians

With all the attention being heaped on the Plains Indians and the Pacific Coast Indians, relatively little is known about the Indians who occupy one of the harshest regions of the world. I refer to the 6,500 Athabascans of Alaska, two-thirds of whom inhabit its vast interior, while the rest live in the city of Fairbanks. Today, radio is bringing to public attention the story of this once nomadic "snowshoe and toboggan" people now occupying villages that grew up around the trading posts or schools founded by the white man. Through a grant from the CPB, the University of Alaska's educational radio station KUAC has produced a series of thirteen half-hour programs entitled "Crossroad in Time." Initially aired in Alaska, the series is scheduled for a wider audience this Fall by National Public Radio.

As the series explains, the coming of the white man brought a seemingly endless demand for furs, a scramble for gold and, more recently, a search for oil. The old Athabascan ways have been slowly abandoned, problems of employment and acculturation have mounted, and the Athabascans have indeed found themselves at a crossroads. Some have accepted village life, others have tried to adopt white life-styles, often to their frustration, while still others have found themselves unable to conform to either society. What is it like to be forced into accepting another man's culture? How does it feel to be pressured – not by force, but by lack of alternative – to deal with another man always on his terms? These broad general questions are explored through topics like Athabascan village life, the impact of a cash economy, unemployment, alcoholism, acculturation, education, the work of native organizations and non-native organizations, etc.

The method used is taped interviews with the Athabascans – ordinary men and women, as well as their chiefs – in the villages, at the University of Alaska, and in the city of Fairbanks. Not all of the persons interviewed resent the white man; one old-timer, recalling the near-starvation winter of 1916, said candidly that "life is a lot easier than it used to be." Yet it is clear that the paternalism of the white man is no longer wanted. As the interviews reveal, the Athabascans, especially the youth, are eager to make it on their own. Their hope lies with the settlement of native land claims filed against the Federal Government, an issue complicated by the recent discovery of oil on Alaska's northern slope. Should the Athabascans and the other native groups win their case, they foresee opportunities to participate in the economic growth of Alaska and to grow in pride and political power.

"Crossroad in Time" is, then, an educational series designed to inform the public of the history and the aspirations of the Athabascans of Alaska. At the same time, the series should dispel the simplistic notion, held by many Americans, that all of the Indian people have similar societies and face similar problems. In fact, the problems vary enormously. Only when they have been identified, as in the "Crossroad" series, can programs be devised to help the Indians everywhere to cope with the white man's world that has been thrust so unceremoniously upon them. ■

by John A. Niemi

REVIVING RADIO LISTENING GROUPS AS CATALYSTS FOR SOCIAL ACTION

John A. Niemi

This article is based on a speech given by John Niemi at the 1971 CADESS Conference held at Lakehead University, June 2, 1971.

Does it seem anachronistic, in this day and age, to talk about reviving radio listening groups? In this article, I hope to convince the reader that the answer is decisively "No." I have a long-standing interest in the topic, for it pertains to the almost untapped potential of radio as a channel for adult education programs which would include telephone communication with listeners, the purpose being to obtain feedback from them and to spur social action on local issues. The idea of listening groups is not, of course, new on the Canadian scene. Throughout the forties and fifties and well into the decade of the sixties, we had in this country a socially powerful network of listening groups called the National Farm Radio Forum. The number of these Forums registered during the three peak seasons was as follows: in 1948-49 – 1,588; in 1949-50 – 1,606; and in 1950-51 – 1,465. Also, the largest number of participants reported at one meeting occurred in the same years: 20,293, 20,769, and 18,119.[1] So successful was this radio-linked adult education enterprise that it may have prompted the 1951 House of Commons Special Committee on Radio Broadcasting to make this comment: "The real job of radio broadcasting in education is the field of adult education."[2]

These preliminary remarks are not intended as a wistful look into the rear-view mirror at the vanished glory of radio. Far from it. I will try to show how and why the revival of the "listening group" type of education for adults is not merely possible, but constitutes a rich resource for bringing social action on important issues. True, the dazzling, ubiquitous TV screen, with its everchanging patterns of sound and colour, seemed for a time to finish off radio, or at least to dim its appeal. But, looking at another Report written two decades after the House of Commons Report to which I referred earlier, we discover some surprising conclusions. The 1971 Report of a Special Committee of the Senate on Mass Media (known as the "Davey Report," after its

Chairman) reveals that "virtually every home in Canada has a minimum of one radio set," and that, "on the average, there are over two radio sets per home . . ."[3] However, the responses of Canadians to questions about programs showed a striking contrast between radio and TV. Whereas ninety-two percent preferred Canadian radio programs, only 43 percent chose Canadian TV programs.[4] On the other hand, when assessed by listeners as a medium of education, radio ran a poor fourth behind TV, newspapers, and magazines.[5] In short, Canadians seem generally to favour their own radio programs, but to place little value on their ability to educate.

I think that, as educators, we have to capitalize on the first finding, i.e., that Canadians like their own radio programs, and to work hard to change attitudes with regard to the second finding, i.e., that radio is not educational. A problem that immediately presents itself is the use of the term "educational" in the Davey Report. Here is a comment applied to TV:

> TV is educational. People like the visual presentation of facts and of entertainment. They understand the news better because they can see what has happened. It allows them to partake of parts of life which ordinarily would be inaccessible.[6]

While this definition has the ring of McLuhan's "global village," other writers question whether such passive viewing results in learning. Miller, for one, states flatly that the objective of ETV is not merely to involve the viewer, whatever that means, but to effect "some well-defined change" in him.[7] To move from the cool TV medium to the hot radio medium, McLuhan implies a unique role for it. "Radio," he says, "affects most people intimately, person-to-person, offering a word of unspoken communication between writer-speaker and listener. This is the immediate impact of radio. A private experience."[8]

Long before McLuhan put it so well, open-line radio programs were providing this kind of experience for listeners. Initially, the radio host permitted them to report via telephone such trivia as missing pets, how to apply for a taxi licence, etc. Then responses began to come in from exhibitionists, from evangelists (political and religious) and from lonely people. And, slowly, the format underwent a change. More and more, the open-line programs came to focus on social issues. Some of these current programs, like CBC's Cross Country Check-Up – which replaced the National Citizens' Forum in 1965 – are based on research and on the availability of a guest expert. Questions are posed primarily to evoke discussion from the radio audience. Here, in the opportunity given the audience to participate, and thus to become emotionally

involved in controversial issues, lies the real value of the talk shows, and the source of their popularity, as Mitford confirms:

> . . . the talk shows thrive on controversy and actively encourage the uncensored airing of non-conformist ideas . . . They at least offer the potential of uninhibited discussion and rough-and-tumble debate. Perhaps in an over-tranquillized land, this is the key to their success.[9]

She also emphasizes that the talk show is overwhelmingly *adult* in its appeal, with less than seven percent of persons under eighteen taking part in the interchange.[10]

Thus, it is all the more surprising to find how few adult educators are taking advantage of the phenomenon called the talk show. There are two reasons why they must become involved. One relates to a weakness I have not mentioned with respect to the talk show: its tendency to invite too many questions to make possible a thorough and logical investigation of a topic. The confusion resulting from the unwitting dissemination of wrong assumptions or half-truths could lead to that most explosive of social situations, the polarization of community opinion on complex issues. Perhaps the situation could be avoided if the adult educator brought to bear his knowledge of adult learning principles and his command of the adult education process. Still another reason why adult educators must pay attention to the talk show is that the host not only provides a public forum for alienated people and others; he has learned how to reach them through a distinctive "style" that encourages them to respond.

Surely it is clear that the broadcaster and the educator must pool their talents to remedy the situation whereby the educational role of radio has, by default, been played out by the broadcaster alone. Such has not always been the case. As stated by the 1965 Report of the Committee on Broadcasting:

> At one time . . . the Canadian Association of Adult Education collaborated with the CBC on the production of twenty-six broadcasts a year . . . The CBC adult education programming is still very impressive, but it is disconcerting to have to report a decline in an area where new development is undoubtedly highly desirable and probably necessary in the absolute sense.[11]

The results of this collaboration between the Canadian Association for Adult Education and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation are perhaps best illustrated with reference to two famous listening group programs – The National Farm Radio Forum and the National Citizens' Forum. Let us look briefly at these programs, to gain some insights into the reasons for their success and to conjecture how this information,

plus a knowledge of the talk show format, could help adult educators to design educational programs.

The first program, the National Farm Radio Forum (1941 – 1965), was an experiment in adult education growing out of the Depression. This listening group project, designed for rural Canadians, sprang from the collaborative efforts of three Canadian organizations – the Canadian Association for Adult Education, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. Here is the statement issued about the aim of the program:

> It was agreed that the aim is . . . to make people face their problems. It would be unwise to assume that people are merely receptive and asking for an advisory service of this kind. We should not tell people what they ought to do, but rather it is very important to let them find out for themselves what needs to be done. An attempt should be made to assume responsibility and take action themselves towards a solution of the problem facing them.[12]

This philosophy crystallized into the Farm Forum slogan "Read – Listen – Discuss and Act with Your Neighbours." And the movement grew with the development of local Forums, whose raison d'etre was described as follows by the Quebec Provincial Farm Forum Secretary:

> An effective job of field work cannot be done by individual contacts made by the Provincial Farm Forum Secretary. Extension through groups has long been recognized as the most efficient and effective method of doing extension work. Members of an existing Forum are as a rule anxious to see other groups organized. They are familiar with the surrounding district and in the best possible position to know the neighbours most likely to organize a Forum.[13]

The organization of listening groups and the development of study materials became the responsibility of the Canadian Association for Adult Education and the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, while the planning and production of programs became the responsibility of the CBC. Of course, in order to be successful, the National Farm Radio Forum had to win the support of influential groups at the provincial level, i.e., universities, governmental departments of agriculture and educational agencies.[14] According to John Ohliger, who has done extensive research on listening groups, the pattern of cooperation thus established persisted with little change during the twenty-five year run of the Farm Forum.[15] But what is important, for our purposes, is that *radio* became the device by which each Forum received information. Every half-hour broadcast contained a twenty-five minute, impartial examination of a topic and a five-minute summary of feedback on previous programs gathered from Forums on a regional basis. The

technique of allowing listeners to respond gave valuable insights into public opinion on social issues. Every fourth broadcast was devoted to a summary from the previous three broadcasts, this time on a national basis. In addition, the Farm Forum delved into topics of national interest. For example, a 1945 program entitled "Education for Rural Living" investigated public opinion on various questions related to rural schools. Focusing on the then controversial issue of the forming of large school districts, the program sought responses from listeners who had had actual experience with these larger units. Here are the findings:

> . . . 83 per cent of the Forums in Alberta, 75 per cent in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, 68 per cent in British Columbia and 33 per cent in Ontario are in districts where larger units have been organized. Of these Forums, 68 per cent are favourably impressed with the results. They reported that the larger unit had brought a more diversified curriculum, better school equipment, improved health services, more recreation, library service, better paid and better placed teachers. They stressed also the fact that more country children now have the opportunity of attending high school.[16]

A significant comment on the findings was this one:

> On the whole the Forum findings showed that farm people can be trusted to make wise decisions regarding rural schools providing they are fully informed, and providing they are consulted when the decisions are made.[17]

The techniques employed in the National Farm Radio Forum programs included the panel discussion, the interview, and others. Also, in order that the rural listener could appraise critically the ideas coming to him over the radio waves, printed materials were distributed prior to a broadcast. Some members subscribed to the CAAE Journal *Food for Thought*, so that they could contribute intelligently to the discussion that followed the broadcasts. After the discussion, reports were compiled by a secretary and forwarded to the provincial office of the Farm Forum. If the listeners had achieved consensus, plans were formulated for a course of action on the problem at the local level. As Ohliger points out:

> Throughout the history of the Farm Forum, the national sponsors placed considerable emphasis on the extensive use of feedback procedures, careful preparation of supplemental printed materials, and the desirability of action resulting from the discussion. It was the long-time emphasis on the combination of these three elements that brought most of the international attention to the Farm Forum.[18]

What courses of social action – to hark back to the purpose of this

article – resulted from the activities of these listening groups? An impressive one relates to the building of a cooperative creamery by farmers in rural Quebec. Prior to the establishment of the Farm Forum in the Eastern Townships of Quebec in 1940, it is reported:

> Farmers were not accustomed to coming together to discuss their problems and to work out a solution together. The Cowansville Co-operative stands as concrete evidence of the new way in which these farmers approach their problems. This creamery was sponsored as an "action project" by the East Farnham and Fordyce Forums. It is typical of the numerous projects which have resulted in rural communities following discussions in Farm Radio Forum.[19]

Or, listen to the voice of Alex Sim, an early leader in mass media and extension work in Canada, speaking in 1946 at a symposium on the future of the Farm Forum:

> . . . I do feel as I drive about the country, often on roads plowed for the first time because Farm Forums got after the Council, or to a film show, or a mass meeting sponsored by a group of Farm Forums, or a newly-organized co-op, that such community efforts will continue and multiply because of the Farm Forum movement.[20]

Compared with the National Farm Radio Forum, the National Citizens' Forum was a less effective listening group. This series, which ran from 1943 to 1965, was developed jointly by the CAAE and the CBC as the urban counterpart of the Farm Forum. Both were composed mainly of community groups organized in a particular neighbourhood, and the format employed by the Citizens' Forum was modelled after that of the Farm Forum. That is, prior to a broadcast, the members of the listening groups received printed material; and five minutes of the thirty-minute broadcasts were devoted to comments from regional forums on the previous broadcast. Also, provision was made for a monthly program, which aired the opinions of the Forums over a national network.

However, the Citizens' Forum never caught on, as the Farm Forum had. As we have seen, the latter enjoyed a natural basis of agricultural support across the country, largely because it presented topics of immediate and obvious concern to farmers and led to direct social action. On the other hand, the Citizens' Forum, dealing with many diverse groups, chose more general topics, and so had difficulty winning support from institutions which had their own adult education programs, e.g., libraries and YMCA. Even individual listeners had a difficult time becoming aroused over such broad topics as the establishment of an international United Nations police force, or the

citizen and his government. In short, the Citizens' Forum failed to take the grass-roots approach that is a basic principle of adult education programming.

Other critical differences existed between the two Forums. The philosophy espoused by the Farm Forum caused it to focus on community problems, an approach reinforced by the slogan "Read – Listen – Discuss and Act with Your Neighbours." On the other hand, the Citizens' Forum envisaged politically enlightened citizens, a philosophy that was not clear to the average listener. Instead of appreciating the long-range value of the series, many citizens became frustrated. They felt that the group decisions they reached were merely academic, that is, unrelated to their everyday world and unlikely to culminate in social action. Moreover, the lack of field organizers for the local Citizens' Forums stood in the way of implementing decisions that might have solved some of their community problems.[21] Finally, the Citizens' Forum ran into difficulty because it copied the long broadcasting "season" which the Farm Forum had developed to meet the social needs of the rural listener. As one writer points out:

> ... the long broadcast season required the sustained attention of the individual as both a listener and as a participant in a discussion group. It was precisely this type of attention that the Citizens' Forum could not muster from the new "time-conscious" urban society, which objected to any lengthy commitments. Besides this fact, the urbanite was in the midst of too many distracting influences, such as commercialized sport, to give his full attention to any one activity over a long length of time.[22]

What can we, as adult educators, learn from the experiences of the National Farm Radio Forum and the National Citizens' Forum? Earlier, I stated that we would try to assess the strengths of these Forums and use this information, along with our knowledge of the talk show format, to draw up some guidelines for adult educators in designing listening group programs via radio. Our purpose, of course, is to promote social action on community problems.

A major strength of the Farm Forum lay in the collaboration, or sharing of expertise, among the three groups which sponsored it – the Canadian Association for Adult Education, the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. The implication for us is that educators and broadcasters must again get together. Today, the adult educator can contribute a sophisticated knowledge, based on research, of the adult learner and of the teaching-learning process. The broadcaster often brings a breezy, colloquial style that puts listeners at ease and persuades them to take part. He also brings such skills as interviewing and scriptwriting.

A second implication that we can draw from the experience of the two Forums is the importance of making the broadcasts and the supplementary materials *relevant* to the interests of the listening groups. The fulfilling of this principle requires the most careful study of community problems and the most careful phrasing of questions – and, above all, the involvement of the listening groups at the program planning stage. We have seen that the Farm Forum drew much of its strength from this practice.

A third implication is the need for a staff of field organizers to organize the listening groups and to act as discussion leaders. As mentioned earlier, the Farm Forum profited greatly from the work of field organizers, whereas the Citizens' Forum suffered because of a lack of such assistance.

A fourth implication arises out of the decision made by the Citizens' Forum to adhere rigidly to the format of the Farm Forum, even to the length of the "season." Yet, clearly, the "season" that was designed for the convenience of the rural listener came into conflict with the life style of the urban listener.

The fifth and last implication relates to evaluation, that most important element of any adult education program. Here, the performance of the National Farm Radio Forum and the National Citizens' Forum was exemplary; both sought feedback from the individual listening groups and both gave comprehensive feedback to the groups through the provincial secretaries.

In conclusion, I would like to make a point that is by no means new or original. The problems we face in the decade of the seventies are among the most compelling that have ever plagued mankind: pollution, conservation, population control. The problems of consumers' rights and transient youth, while smaller in scope, loom importantly in many communities. Many of these issues are of a highly charged nature, touching people's lives intimately. Yet few opportunities exist for citizens to gather for a rational discussion of the issues. Instead, there is an unfortunate tendency for opinions to polarize, for attitudes to harden rather than to mellow – and the result is often violence. What is our responsibility as adult educators? Although radio listening groups offer no panacea, we have conclusive proof of their effectiveness on the Canadian scene as catalysts for social action. Shouldn't we give them another try?

REFERENCES

1. Terrence Robert Morrison. "The Development of National Radio Education in Canada 1929-1949." Unpublished M.A. thesis, The University of British Columbia, 1967, p. 191.

2. *Proceedings of the House of Commons Special Committee on Radio Broadcasting.* Ottawa: King's Printer for Canada, 1951, p. 178.
3. Report of the Special Senate Committee on Mass Media: *Mass Media: Good, Bad, or Simply Inevitable?* Ottawa: Queen's Printer for Canada, 1970, III, p. 11.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 45.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
7. Harry L. Miller. *Teaching and Learning in Adult Education,* Toronto: Collier-Macmillan Canada, Ltd., 1967, p. 270.
8. Marshall McLuhan. *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man.* Toronto: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1964, p. 299.
9. J. Mitford. "Hello There! You're on the Air" *Harpers Magazine,* Vol. 232 (May 1966), p. 53.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 48.
11. *Report of the Committee on Broadcasting.* Ottawa: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1965, pp. 280-81.
12. Neil M. Morrison. "Farmers Air Their Problems." *Food for Thought,* No. 16, June 1941, p. 7.
13. R. A. Sim, *Farm Radio Forum.* Paris: UNESCO, 1954, p. 73.
14. T. Morrison, *op. cit.*, pp. 194-199.
15. John Ohliger. *Listening Groups: Mass Media in Adult Education.* Boston: CSLEA, 1967, p. 40.
16. Ruth I. McKenzie. "Forum Findings on Education." *Food for Thought,* Vol. 5, No. 7 (April 1945), p. 37.
17. *Ibid.*
18. Ohliger, *op. cit.*, p. 42.
19. Ruth I. McKenzie, "Action – Farm Forum Style." *Food for Thought,* Vol. 5, No. 1 (October 1944), p. 32.
20. "The Future of Farm Forum," *Food for Thought,* Vol. 6, No. 8 (April, 1946), p. 35.
21. George Grant. "Report on Citizen's Forum," *Food for Thought,* Vol. 5, No. 9, (June-July, 1945), p. 25.
22. T. Morrison, *op. cit.*, p. 228.

John Niemi is Associate Professor of Adult Education at the University of British Columbia.

Tidings! Tidings! Tidings!

The Raven Brings Tidings*

JOHN A. NIEMI AND ADRIAN BLUNT

The Indians of the Pacific Northwest coast have many legends to tell about Raven. Some tell of how Raven created the world. Some tell of how he brought light to the world. A contemporary version of Raven's mythological abilities to communicate exists today, as the philosophy of a British Columbia society called the Radio and Audio-Visual Education Network (RAVEN). RAVEN intends to establish in this province an Indian communications network that will operate beyond the boundaries of the various Indian Bands and the bureaucratic communication channels of governments.

The rugged, heavily forested, fjord coastline of British Columbia has ensured the geographic isolation of its residents. With few mail deliveries, no daily newspapers, no telephones and poor, if any, radio and television reception, most small coastal communities suffer a severe communications gap. Additionally, the Indian people have suffered social, economic and cultural isolation, as a consequence of legislative restrictions under the Indian Act and an imposed social system. It is now widely known that the majority of Indian people are enduring all the miseries of poverty and deprivation characterized by isolation, low standards of living, a high infant mortality rate, a low life expectancy, and inadequate education for employment and self-sufficiency. This state of affairs is one that RAVEN wishes to see changed. Recognizing that communication among these isolated and disadvantaged Indian groups is essential for social change, RAVEN is presently establishing a radio network to link coastal Indian communities. RAVEN is also providing visual media, such as videotapes, to enable the people to study their problems and to cooperate actively in solving them.

The concept of RAVEN was formed in 1969 by the Society for a Coastal Area Network (SCAN), a non-Indian organization established to improve communications and to promote social change among rural people along the British Columbia coast. Initially, SCAN was supported by grants from Le Centre des Recherches Sociales of Montreal, the Catholic Archdiocese of Victoria, and Simon Fraser University.[1] In its study of the needs of rural people, SCAN discovered that the greatest need

© 1971 by Acolyte Publications Corp. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or part without written permission is strictly prohibited.

*George Clutesi. *Potlatch*. Sidney, B.C.: Gray's Publishing Ltd.

for communication existed among the coastal Indian communities. Hence, upon receiving promise of a grant of $60,000 from the Donner Foundation, SCAN worked to establish RAVEN. Members of SCAN visited the coastal Indian communities to try to gauge the people's reactions to the idea. After some initial difficulties, a meeting was arranged with some outstanding Indian leaders to discuss RAVEN and its implementation. Finally in May 1969, RAVEN was registered as a nonprofit society. Since that time, in addition to the Donner Foundation grant, RAVEN has received a grant of $30,000 from the Government of British Columbia's First Citizens' Fund and $1,000 from the Leon and Thea Koerner Foundation to establish a library of cultural films.

Today, RAVEN's board of directors, consisting of seven Indians and two non-Indians, operates independently of the parent society SCAN. RAVEN's President is George Clutesi, author and artist from the Tseshaht Band. Its Chairman of the Board is Guy Williams, a member of the Kitimat Band, President of the Native Brotherhood and Publisher of the *Native Voice*, a monthly B.C. Indian newspaper. And its Executive Director is Chief Arnold Recalma of the Qualicum Band.* In planning its development, RAVEN has sought and obtained advice from consultants at the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, Canadian Marconi and from private individuals.

The program objectives of RAVEN were stated as follows:

1. To promote communications among Indian communities and between Indians and the larger communities of British Columbia.
2. To use modern technological means to achieve the educational and cultural goals of the Indian people of British Columbia.
3. To promote community programs such as health education and career preparation through the use of media.
4. To sponsor public lectures and meetings, and to publish such journals, papers or articles that serve the objectives of the society.
5. To increase the effective participation of the Indian people in the mainstream of Canadian life.[2]

RAVEN believes that through the media, it can bring news, cultural programs and educational programs specially designed for Indians into Indian communities; inform isolated communities about the goals and values of the dominant society; and help to instill in the Indian people a new sense of community, pride and group responsibility. In other words, RAVEN can, as an Indian organization, create a climate for social change in Indian communities by establishing a communications network among them to fully utilize their resources. At the same time, this network would offer a means whereby Indian communities could tap the resources of governments and other institutions.

It is important to note that these objectives of RAVEN faithfully reflect the concerns and the recommendations of the three national Indian organizations, as expressed in 1969 in a brief submitted to the Special Senate Committee on Mass Media. In their opening statement, the Canadian Metis Society, the National Indian Brotherhood of Canada and the Indian-Eskimo Association of Canada bluntly charged the media with the responsibility "for social change and truly democratic dialogue . . . . The media should present the poor, involve the poor and program to the poor. Theirs is an oral culture, so film and the electronic media can play a crucial role in promotion of democratic dialogue and social change."[3] Earlier, in a brief to the Canadian Radio and Television Commission, the three Indian organizations quoted approvingly these words of Dr. David McQueen, deputy chairman of the Economic Council of Canada, speaking to the Senate Committee on Poverty:

> *One of the most important things you can do will be to bring the silent constituency of the poor themselves to life . . . . The poor, for various reasons which are no fault of their own, are inclined to be inarticulate. They are comparatively unacquainted with the process by which certain groups express their interests, and so express them that those interests in turn are dealt with through the medium of government policies. You will have to reach out to the poor, encourage them to be articulate and bring them along to the more fruitful consideration of their own problems. This is most important because they have a great deal to teach us about what is wrong with our present structure of antipoverty programs—why they are not doing the things we often suppose them to be doing.*[4]

In the opinion of the Indian organizations, Dr. McQueen's statement "should serve as [the broadcasters'] guideline in planning and producing programs for the Indians, Eskimos and Metis."[5, 6] They also recommended that "such projects as . . . RAVEN . . . should be encouraged and supported where they are technically feasible and financially possible."[6]

This emphasis on problems of communication among the poor also appears in a study by Anderson and Niemi:

> *The disadvantaged often limit themselves to a distinct style of communication, and most under-educated adults prefer to communicate on the nonverbal level because of limited vocabulary and limited articulation. The style of learning is not set to respond to oral or written stimuli, and the disadvantaged tend to respond more readily to visual or tactile-kinesthetic signals and to make judgments more on actions than words.*[7]

In developing its program, RAVEN had to deal with complications arising from the distances separating the various Indian Bands, and from differences in language and culture. Accordingly, RAVEN hit on the idea of using videotapes initially, to bring the Indians of the West Coast closer to each other and to put them in more direct touch with governments and other institutions. How was this feat accomplished? Firstly, RAVEN decided to tape all the important meetings in which the Indian people took part, e.g., their interview with the Rt. Hon. Jean Chretien, minister of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, about the Federal Government's proposed Indian policy; and the annual convention of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs.

Results

What were the results? Through these videotapes, RAVEN established a communication cycle. The Indians on their reserves saw and heard the exchange between the Minister and their own representatives. The Indians also watched their delegates at work at the annual convention of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs. Later, some Indians reported their reactions to RAVEN and to the individuals who had participated in the meetings. The seeds of such community involvement are taking root in the form of dialogues among the Bands, and also between them and the dominant Canadian society. Here, RAVEN adopts a neutral stance, so that both sides of an issue can be debated and the people can feel free to draw their own conclusions.

*Dora Cook, Community Leader, Nimpkish Band; Sam Lewis, Band Manager, Squamish Band; Ross R. Modeste, Acting Director, Union of British Columbia Chiefs, Cowichan Band; and Ed Newman, Councillor and Magistrate, Bella Bella Band.

Recently, RAVEN has been offered the opportunity to videotape the special lectures given by George Clutesi, whose knowledge of the history and culture of the West Coast Indian people is recognized by Indians and non-Indians alike. During the past year, he has talked to groups at the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University and the University of Victoria. Another educational project grew out of the National Indian Education Conference at the University of British Columbia in May 1970. At that time, RAVEN accepted a share of the responsibility for increasing the Indian cultural content of education for Indians and non-Indians in the schools of British Columbia.

The next stage in RAVEN's development was the licensing by the Federal Government Department of Communications of a two-way radio communication network on three frequencies. Indian communities interested in the single-sideband radio to be used in the system were encouraged to contact RAVEN. Today RAVEN holds licenses for six Indian villages. As shown in Figure 1, the four stations and the base station at Qualicum represent the beginning of an extensive network. The sixth station license granted for North Vancouver is not needed by the urban Band located there, and so will be used later to transmit network information. As the range of the transmitter is 350 miles, it will be possible for the base station Qualicum, which will have three channels, to be reached by any station of the network on one of those channels. Hopefully, dialogue will start up among the Bands, to dispel some persistent misunderstandings arising out of Band and language differences. Future plans call for 32 stations to be added to the network.

The third stage in RAVEN's development is the setting up of an cultural and historical library. One purpose of the library will be to record on film as much as possible of the "old" Indian life, so that future generations of Canadians, Indians and non-Indians alike, can appreciate this important part of Canada's history. It is hoped that the library will also "dub" videotapes and generally operate as a distribution center for educational materials of all kinds.

Personnel

The Executive Director of RAVEN, Chief Recalma, drew initially upon the radio experience he had gained while working as a commercial fisherman. Then, through trials and errors, illuminated by technical advice from hardware salesmen, Chief Recalma learned to use video-tape equipment to good effect. Presently he is assisted by his wife Diane and Greg Williams, working as a team. The latter is a young Indian who has taken a media course through the Vancouver School Board.

Plans have been laid for on-the-job training for a second team. It will travel around the province to tape and film happenings and, at the same time, to carry tape and film to communities requesting specific information. This on-the-job training, aimed at capturing the action, will not follow a rigid pattern, but will leave the technician free to pursue his creative impulses.

The training of native operators for the radio communication network mentioned earlier is being handled by Chief Recalma himself. Each of the operators instructed by him will train others, so that, eventually, every village in the network will boast someone capable of operating the equipment at any time of the day or night.

Equipment

The decision to split the RAVEN project into three phases—video, radio and film—held implications for the purchase of equipment. For the first phase, video, RAVEN chose Shibaden ½-inch equipment. Now, RAVEN possesses two video cameras, two videotape recorders, a monitor, a mike, lights, etc. Future plans call for the purchase of one-inch videotape equipment.

For the second phase, radio, RAVEN has chosen Marconi single-sideband transmitter and receiver sets. The cost of each

Figure 1: RAVEN stations (1-7) and major cities of British Columbia.

1. New Aiyansh
2. Skidegate
3. Bella Bella
4. Albert Bay
5. Qualicum (Base Station)
6. North Vancouver
7. Cloverdale (Future Station)
8. Vancouver
9. Victoria
10. Prince Rupert

(complete with towers and pretuned antennas) is slightly under $2,000. Every village will be expected to purchase its own sets. RAVEN will give advice about obtaining funds from governments and foundations. For the third phase, film, both 35-mm. cameras and 16-mm. movie cameras have been acquired.

RAVEN's Future

RAVEN has interesting plans for the future. The first is to investigate the possibilities of training health workers. From each village one person would be selected to work closely with doctors and other health professionals. He would then return to his village to share his new-found knowledge with his people. Through the use of radio, such para-medical personnel would be able to converse intelligently with doctors, especially in emergencies when medical advice is urgently needed. Indeed, radio would make it possible for all the people in the village to enjoy a continuous on-going program of health care.

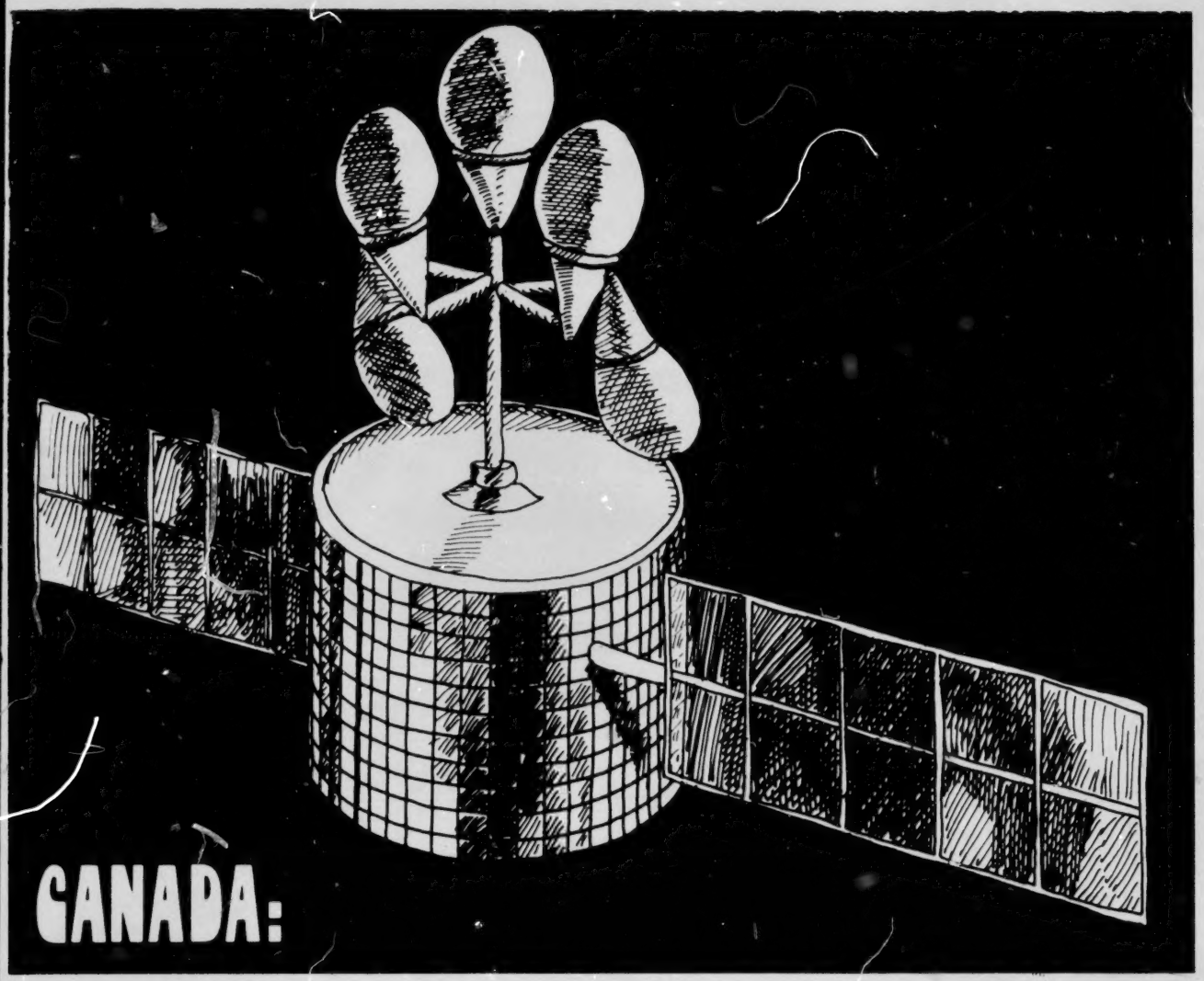
Another future project is the acquisition of a station owned by the Canadian Overseas Telecommunications Corporation in Cloverdale, British Columbia (Figure 1). Using those facilities, RAVEN could disseminate information throughout the Yukon Territory and the province of British Columbia. And, over this area-wide radio communication network, programs like the broadcasting of an important conference could be transmitted to all the villages contained in this vast area. In turn, each village having a transmitter could broadcast to the entire province. Finally, the network would also serve as an emergency communication system.

In closing, Raven of old was to the Indians a mystical power or force that brought them good tidings. The old symbolism is very much alive today, but a new dimension has been added. RAVEN now symbolizes another kind of power, this one created by modern technology. This power is breaking down ancient barriers that have for generations separated Band from Band across great distances. Through RAVEN, the Indians are becoming aware of common bonds and common problems, and they are seeking common solutions to those problems. And RAVEN is not only a bringer of information to Indians, but to non-Indians as well. They, in their turn, are becoming aware of common bonds with the Indians and learning to value Indian traditions and lore.

References

1. The National Indian Brotherhood of Canada; The Canadian Metis Society of Canada; The Indian-Eskimo Association of Canada. *Radio and Television Service for Indian, Eskimo and Metis Communities.* A joint brief to the Canadian Radio and Television Commission, 1969, p. 12.
2. Constitution of the Raven Society.
3. Canadian Metis Society; National Indian Brotherhood of Canada; Indian-Eskimo Association of Canada. *Presentation to Special Senate Committee on Mass Media,* Dec., 1969, p.3.
4. The National Indian Brotherhood of Canada, op. cit., pp. 16-17.
5. Ibid., p. 17.
6. Ibid., p. 27.
7. Darrell Anderson and John A. Niemi. *Adult Education and the Disadvantaged Adult.* Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University, 1970, p. 27. ■

John A. Niemi is Associate Professor of Adult Education, and Adrian Blunt is Research Assistant, Center for Continuing Education, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada.



CANADA: INTO THE 'BROTHERHOOD' OF ANIK

DR. JOHN A. NIEMI

When we survey the Canadian scene today with respect to mass media and adult education, the most important development has undoubtedly been the birth of Anik (pronounced Ah-neek). Anik is not an Eskimo baby, though the name means "brother," but the name of Canada's new domestic satellite communications system. A product of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's administration, the satellite is under the control of Telecast Canada, a government corporation which is planning to launch the satellite from Cape Kennedy in early 1972.

The satellite will make Canada the first nation to have its own domestic satellite communications system – and the result will be a great boost in telephone, telegraph and television transmission to all parts of Canada. The development also promises certain by-products which will have important implications for national unity. It represents a major step toward reaching 10 percent of the population who live, not in a belt within 200 miles of the United States border, but in the vast remote northern regions. It is interesting to note that opening the northland, so to speak, coincides with the interest of the Trudeau administration in furthering the economic growth of that region. As stated in the government's *White Paper* (March, 1968) describing the satellite system:

The reduced sense of isolation that this would achieve could have a marked beneficial influence in attracting personnel to government and industrial projects in remote areas.[1]

In addition, events of national concern can be simultaneously televised to all six time zones. Also the problem of bilingualism may be eased, because it will be possible to beam programs in both English and French across the country. To quote *The Christian Science Monitor:*

The satellite is supposed to be as much a political symbol as a technical achievement in the effect it has in reducing internal tensions that threaten common purpose and national unity.[2]

From the point of view of adult educators, the most exciting feature of the satellite is the promise it holds for national PTV at economic cost. Unfortunately, the Canadian govern-

© 1970 by Acolyte Publications Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or part without written permission is strictly prohibited.

ment has backed away from its earlier interest in PTV, as manifested by a bill presented to Parliament in early 1969 for the creation of a Canadian Educational Broadcasting Agency to establish and operate for the provinces a series of UHF stations. One reason for this retreat was the perennial problem of federal-provincial relations in the field of education. Since this responsibility is vested historically in the provinces, and sometimes guarded jealously by them, it is difficult to receive agreement on the related matters of financing and control. Another possible reason was the concern expressed by the Canadian Association for Adult Education over the narrow "credit" definition of educational programs.[3] In effect, this definition would preclude the development of noncredit adult education programs designed to assist members of a community to solve their problems; for example, it would not be possible to have a short series on the abuses of drugs. In addition, the coming of CATV has made the more expensive UHF less attractive. The upshot is that the federal government has required all CATV operators to reserve at least one channel for educational programs. The impact of CATV on Canadian society was summarized recently by Pierre Juneau, chairman of the Canadian Radio-Television Commission (CRTC):

. . . penetration into large sections of this country is higher than anywhere else in the world. Overall saturation in Canada appears to be around 13 percent of the nation's television households, compared to less than five percent in the United States. Five systems in Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia are larger than any in the United States.[4]

Among the CATV guidelines laid down by the Canadian Radio-Television Commission is provision for educational programs having to do with matters of local interest. The usual concept of a national network will not be permitted, though the commission may approve the linking of two adjacent CATV systems for the distribution of locally produced programs. Financing will come from subscriber revenue, since the commission will not permit commercials to be presented on the channel reserved for local educational programs. As an illustration of what is being done, CATV personnel in Vancouver are currently working closely with the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, British Columbia Institute of Technology, Vancouver City College, the Vancouver School Board and other community agencies to plan and produce local public service programs—for example, at income tax time last year, the Federal Department of Revenue presented a pilot program on Vancouver's Channel 10 designed to help people complete their income tax returns. The advantages of CATV are that it provides the people in a particular area with programs based on their needs. To the adult educator, the system affords an opportunity to design programs for a primetime and at a minimum cost.

"Frankly, George, when you invited me to an evening of watching public television, I hardly suspected . . ."

Mass Media/Adult Education

Recently, through the Canadian Association for Adult Education, I acquired time on the same channel for the students enrolled in my graduate course called *Mass Media and Adult Education.* In order to prepare these students to produce programs for Channel 10, I have had them view educational programs offered over Vancouver and Seattle stations, and to evaluate the programs according to an instrument developed in my mass media class last year: divided into two sections, the instrument (first) involves *Objective Evaluation* which lists such vital elements of program design as objectives, content, technique and studio techniques, and (second) *Subjective Evaluation* which calls upon students to act as judges, to assess the impact of the program on the viewer with reference to the instructor's appearance, personality, knowledge of subject, etc., and studio techniques, ideas presented and supporting devices . . .

To return to the project with this year's students, they have reported similar findings with respect to deficiencies in ETV programs. Now they are dividing themselves into task groups to produce four programs on CATV, under the umbrella of adult education, beginning early this month. The programs will deal with such varied topics as the derelict on Skid Row, the dynamics of group interaction and an overview of the many institutions which provide educational opportunities for adults in the Vancouver area. This live on-air experience represents a valuable opportunity for these future adult educators. Present plans are to videotape the programs in the CCTV studio in the Faculty of Education of the University of British Columbia. When the program is aired, students will be at the studio to answer questions directed to them over the telephone by viewers.

Provide Insights

Through public service programming similar to these adult education offerings, Channel 10 will be able to meet the various needs of the community and to provide insights into mass media broadcasting. At present, the federal government is concerned about the extent and nature of the impact of mass media on the Canadian public. Recently a special committee of the Senate on Mass Media was appointed to investigate the problem.

Another significant development in mass media and adult education is the design of communication systems for specific groups which might be classified as subcultures. In British Columbia, the Radio and Visual Education Network (RAVEN) is attempting to develop better communication among the 40,000 native Indians of the province. Through the use of videotape, the staff of RAVEN records events of interest to the Indian people. The tapes are available at the band council meetings throughout the province, to provide Indians

with accurate information when they face critical issues which require decisions. RAVEN has received funds from the First Citizen's Fund of the British Columbia Government and from the Donner Foundation.

Through programs like RAVEN, it again becomes possible to reach those Canadians who live outside the mainstream of national life. One estimate made in a survey of the "unreached," as they are sometimes called, sets the figure at 11 percent.[5] Of course the figure includes not only Indians and Eskimos, but the urban poor, including dropouts and ethnic groups: 2.2 million of Canada's population of 20 million know virtually nothing about federal-provincial involvement, the question which was the focus of the survey. Some notable attempts to reach these people have been made by the National Film Board through their *Challenge for Change* series. With locally produced films, the NFB has involved the people in community action by making them aware of the problems which do exist. The purpose of the program was to help eradicate the causes of poverty by acting as a catalyst for self-generated social change. A characteristic of the program is that the people themselves are involved in the production of the films.

Turning now to radio, I find that it is also being used to deal with problems in the Northern regions. Here the Indian-Eskimo Association selects field workers who put together programs on local issues in isolated communities. The programs are then broadcast in the native language to the people of those communities. Likewise, radio is reaching out to the Canadian Radio Television Commission, the philosophy behind the use of radio has been outlined as follows:

Clearly, the first need is for information. Indian people must know what are their opportunities, their rights. This is not an easy need to meet. Schools, pamphlets and other educational efforts have failed miserably as statistics will show. The problems, rules and programs are usually so complex that their use can be explained only through test cases carefully studied. Indian people on the edge of subsistence do not have the resources to experiment with the meanings of words, and bureaucratic forms.[6]

Canada's new domestic satellite communications system and the other developments in television, film and radio all hold important implications for adult educators in Canada. For this spanning of vast distances to reach adult with yearnings as yet scarcely defined will demand of us a high degree of ingenuity and compassion in planning programs for them. To the extent that we are able to meet their needs, we will truly help to fulfill the promise of Anik, the Eskimo word meaning "brother."

References

1. *White Paper on A Domestic Satellite Communication System for Canada.* Ottawa: The Queen's Printer, 1968, p. 34.
2. *The Christian Science Monitor,* Thursday, October 23, 1969.
3. Knowles, A. F., *Canadian Education—And Television, Continuous Learning,"* Vol. 8, No. 3, May-June, 1969, p. 118.
4. *Electron,* June, 1969, p. 24.
5. *To Know and Be Known:* The *Report of the Task Force on Government Information* Ottawa: The Queen's Printer, 1969, p. 284.
6. Ibid, pp. 291-292. ■

Dr. John A. Niemi is Associate Professor of Adult Education, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada.

TEVEC & Project Multi-Media

When one studies the social history of the U.S. and Canada, he is immediately struck by the many cultures and languages that present themselves. A major difference is that the U.S. uses English as its official language, whereas Canada was founded as a bi-cultural and bilingual nation. As a result, in the Province of Quebec, where French-Canadians make up a majority of the population, two separate educational systems grew up, one French and one English. Prior to 1964, the French-Canadians participated in a church-dominated educational system aimed primarily at providing a "classical" education. Since then, significant changes have occurred. For example, as an alternative to the traditional church-run college classique, the Province has established the tuition-free junior college known as "College d'Enseignement General et Professionel" (CEGEP). The Province has also called upon the resources of TV for educating adults. Two innovative projects are worthy of attention.

One, known as TEVEC (Television Educative du Quebec), was planned to promote social advancement in the interests of 59,000 adults residing in the Saguenay-Lac St. Jean region. This area was beset by the two-fold problem of a high unemployment rate and a low educational standard. But there was also a venturesome spirit, an open-mindedness on the part of the population about participating in a pilot project. The content of the TV programs included traditional school topics such as French, mathematics and English. All were integrated with sociocultural topics to enable adults to cope more efficiently with the demands of everyday living.

This pilot project transmitted TV programs daily for one-and-one-fourth hours, with the programs for Monday through Thursday devoted to one socioeconomic subject. The Friday programs, which lasted one hour, were used for summary purposes, to check responses to questions and to promote other activities of the Project. In addition to these programs, the Project sponsored discussion groups (Tele-clubs) and correspondence courses.

The lessons learned from the pilot project (1966-69) culminated in the establishment of Project Multi-Media in 1970. The objective is to develop the untapped resources of the disadvantaged adult by preparing for him twice daily TV programs. These concentrate on teaching him *how* to think rather than to memorize facts. The content of the course centers on practical topics such as sex education, budgeting and housing problems. As with TEVEC, specific concepts of language and mathematics are taught when the need arises. Although individuals may learn on their own, the "listening group" approach taken by the Project is especially fruitful for adults who lack confidence or have difficulty formulating ideas. The stimulation and support offered by the groups can be a crucial factor in defining and solving problems.

An exciting aspect of Project Multi-Media is the involvement in the program-planning process of delegates from citizens' committees organized at the local level. These delegates join others from Radio Canada and from the Quebec Ministries of Education, Labour and Social Affairs. While this central commission determines policy, the everyday operations of Project Multi-Media come under the supervision of eight project teams: field staff training and supervision, curriculum development, program production, documentation, information and feedback, administration, research and extension of the Project to other areas.

With its 859,000 registrants and its wide-ranging program, Project Multi-Media is certainly ambitious in scope and purpose. It will pay us to watch closely the progress of this Quebec experiment in adult education. ■

by John A. Niemi

Public TV: Educational Gap?

Everywhere, the need is urgent for public affairs programming to awaken and inform citizens about public issues, whether they involve religious strife as in Northern Ireland or social-political problems like the expulsion of the Uganda Asians. In the United States, public affairs programming is desperately needed to deal with issues that are racking the country, especially Vietnam, which has become an international issue, too. Yet the situation is being exacerbated by the Administration's attempt to limit the vistas of viewers by suggesting to Congress legislation that would hold station managers accountable for their programs at license-renewal time. The January 1, 1973, issue of *Newsweek* sees this move as a strategy to force stations to suppress reporting and documentary programming. Obviously, the Administration believes that the stations are biased.

Perhaps part of the trouble resides in some broadcasters' meager understanding of the educational process. Eugene Johnson, in a recent ERIC publication, describes this problem as follows:

> The concept of education that most broadcasters of public affairs programs seem to have is that of one-directional flow of information, ideas and stimuli. The hope is that somehow this will inform and enlighten people and bring about a better world. One television producer of programs in the public affairs field . . . said "I see my job as putting interesting personalities on the air. Period!"

This example is an extreme yet not uncommon, one of a philosophy that leaves learning to chance. Johnson asserts that so long as such thinking dominates public affairs programming, "any attempt to focus on educational objectives will be short-circuited." We need not worry that the setting of education objectives will impose a mechanistic and sterile design on public affairs programming. On the contrary, it could be made more exciting, more compelling, if materials and services were added so that viewers would be actively involved – in much the same manner as the old Canadian National Farm Radio Forum. An example of materials is a study or discussion guide that could be used by individuals or groups to stimulate further inquiry. By services, I have in mind the selection of group discussion leaders who would spur the various groups to discuss the material presented in the telecast; and, secondly, the use of telephone "hot lines" to the TV studios, where experts could handle questions from individuals on their own account or as representatives of their discussion groups.

This whole area of public affairs programming has been a long-neglected aspect of adult education. Back in 1962, Johnstone and Rivera found in a nationwide study of participants (*Volunteers for Learning* published in 1965) in adult education programs, that only three percent of such offerings were in public affairs and current events. More than a decade has passed since Johnstone and Rivera's study. During that time, we have learned much about the potential of TV to create an enlightened citizenry. We also know that in this epoch of tension and change, the citizens must be educated to grasp the substance of vital issues, to the end that people will make rational decisions. But are we putting our knowledge into practice? Are we producing public affairs programs soundly based upon educational principles, programs in which the people themselves take an active part? How far do we still have to go? ■

by John A. Niemi

... On Sesame Street for Adults

Widely hailed as the best children's show in tv history, *Sesame Street* has won plaudits from the Educational Testing Service (Princeton, N.J.). They report that the cognitive skills of poor children have improved by as much as 62 percent, as a result of their involvement with *Sesame Street*. Is there a lesson here for adult educators and media specialists? Undoubtedly part of the answer lies in an analysis of the process, not the content. Instead of a conventional classroom lesson presented in linear sequence, the multisensory nature of television has been fully exploited in *Sesame Street*. The viewer has been enticed into taking part, a necessary condition if the objective of effecting some well-defined change in the learner is to be met.

Another part of the answer to our question can be found in the attention paid to the needs of the learner, the child who watches *Sesame Street*. Hopefully, through their research and their publications, adult educators have emphasized the specific needs of adult learners, especially the disadvantaged. And so the simplistic thinking that culminated in the use of children's materials with such adults has finally been dispersed. The realization has dawned that television programs must be designed specially for them. To be sure, efforts have been made sporadically over the past 15 years or so at educating adults in the poverty groups via television. Many of these early programs, e.g. Streamlined English II and Operation Alphabet, focussed on literacy skills, but the teacher-centered, or lecture-type, presentation had limited success. Probably the timing of the programs (sometimes very early in the morning) and their extension over a period of many months contributed to the problem.

Another problem has been that although conscientious efforts were made to employ words borrowed from everyday situations, such words were often treated in isolation, instead of being applied directly to life situations facing the adult. In other words, the basic education skills of reading, writing and computation must be integrated with life skills that will help the learner to cope with his environment.

One significant new program, just beginning, that observes these principles is Rural Family Development (RFD), emanating from WHA-TV, Madison, Wis. The content is specifically oriented to the problems and needs of rural farm families. Hence, the traditional scope and sequence of previous programs have been largely abandoned. The expectations of the RFD planners is that their program will encourage a "drop-in" instead of a "drop-out" rate. Their expectations seem justified, because they have involved their audience: the planners have designed programs tailored to the needs of these rural adults, and have exploited the unique potential of television. An "Action Line" (telephone) and episodic "flashes" like an interview with Johnny Cash, and hints on hammering nails, repairing rubber gaskets and making a meal in one pot supplant linear presentations of material—and so educate while appearing to entertain. Here is a program that may do for disadvantaged adults what *Sesame Street* has done for disadvantaged children.

■

by John A. Niemi

The Soap Opera – A Viable Format for Adult Education via TV?

The suggestion that the soap opera offers a viable format for adult education programs via TV might raise some eyebrows among TV specialists and educators. But can we reject the soap opera as passe? When dealing with the needs of an adult population, we should not only seek new formats; we should reexamine older ones, looking, as McLuhan would say, into the "rear-view mirror."

The soap opera originated as a daytime serial during the golden era of radio, and drew its name from the soap manufacturers who sponsored such odysseys as "Ma Perkins," an entertainment hit for 27 years. And, of course, this format has been transferred to the TV medium for entertainment purposes. The most notable recent triumph was the highly sophisticated "Forsyte Saga."

But what is the potential of the soap opera for adult education programs? Two such programs were specifically designed for adult audiences whose needs could not be met through regular educational programming. In both cases, the dramatic soap opera format was selected to present messages of social adjustments (coping skills) within the context of the daily activities of groups isolated by language barriers from the dominant society.

The first example was a 13-week series in 1968-69 of daily half-hour dramas focussing on probiems of social adjustment affecting the lives of a Mexican-American barrio family. KCET (Los Angeles) received a Ford Foundation Grant for "Cancion de la Raza." This program concentrated on major themes that emerged from field interviews about the needs of the majority of Mexican-Americans (e.g., they need not fear standing up for their rights when dealing with public agencies, and that it is important for them to take an active interest in politics.) Through such themes, and by selecting local acting talent, the programs appeared credible to the viewers. This venture also included an open-line telephone link to the station. In the evaluation of the program, the most significant finding was that some viewers were contemplating actions which they ordinarily would not take (e.g., joining community, social and political organizations).

Our second example of an ethnic soap opera appeared first in 1970 on Toronto's Channel 19 and Hamilton's Channel 11 under the auspices of the Ontario Educational Communications' Authority. "Castle Zaremba," designed to teach the English language and Canadian customs to the flood of new immigrants, consisted of 16 episodes set in a Toronto rooming house. Like "Cancion de la Raza," the program centered around everyday situations that most people take for granted but often prove baffling to new immigrants (e.g., how to find a job and what to do when questioned by the police). To help them further, the scripts themselves are available in paperback and on tape. Evaluation of the impact of this soap opera is currently under way.

My discussion of two ethnically oriented programs based on the soap opera format does not imply that it should be used exclusively for such groups. My point is simply that it should not be ignored, for the soap opera gives the adult educator an alternative to more structured approaches such as the lecture, with its emphasis on dispensing information. The soap opera represents an additional tool to use when planning programs with TV specialists. ■ **by John A. Niemi**

Cablecasting: Involving the Community

DR. JOHN A. NIEMI

With the initial allocation of channels in the U.S. in 1945, television emerged from the laboratory. Since then, it has become the most pervasive means for mass communication. In the areas of newscasting, product promotion and entertainment, the success of tv is well documented. It has also enjoyed limited success in educational broadcasting, e.g. *Sunrise Semester*, the Canadian CTV network's *University of the Air* Series and Chicago's *TV College*, programs focussed chiefly on specific individual needs. There have been few programs designed to make members of a community more aware of its potential, its problems, etc. Two excellent examples are the St. Louis *Metroplex Assembly* (1956-63) and the 1969 Los Angeles *Cancion de la Raza*, which dealt with the plight of the Mexican-Americans. These programs were made possible through Foundation money. The problem to date with PTV has been a lack of funds. Yet we are currently in a critical period in which, ironically, many North Americans receive expert briefings on world problems, while remaining ignorant of problems clamoring for attention in their own communities. What is needed is a local channel to permit all sides of an issue to be aired.

One possible approach is the utilization of closed-circuit cable companies for educational broadcasting (cablecasting). Canada moved in this direction in May, 1969, when the Radio and Television Commission required all existing and future CATV licensees to set aside one channel for educational programming.

The possibilities of cablecasting were illustrated in a recent issue of the Toronto *Globe* and *Mail*. One cable company is planning public affairs programs, originating at major hotels, University of Toronto, Royal Ontario Museum, etc. Another company plans to telecast half its programs in Italian, Greek, East Indian, Portuguese and Yiddish.

What are the advantages of a closed-circuit system? There is no need for the high quality, slick productions required for entertainment. In fact, the rough-hewn nature of cablecast often gives it an appealing authenticity. Since less equipment is called for, costs remain low. The absence of advertising makes more time available, and programs can be easily promoted. In addition, cablecasting could both provide training for future educational broadcasters and offer unique opportunities for educators and people in the community to work together. ■

The Davey Report: Whither Cablecasting?

DR. JOHN A. NIEMI

In my December column "Cablecasting: Involving The Community," I explored the educational broadcasting potential of a closed-circuit system. Now, the release of a Canadian report on the Mass Media has made available some valuable data on this system in Canada. The Report is the outcome of a study undertaken by a special Committee of the Canadian Senate, under the chairmanship of Sen. Keith Davey.

Of particular interest is the Committee's view that "the development of community programmes on cable television strikes us as a most welcome addition to mass media in Canada, a new dimension that can dramatically improve the quality of life in our country." Undoubtedly, cable systems will continue to expand their community programs. If these are imaginatively conceived, it is likely that persons who were hitherto satisfied with commercial programs, and who felt no need for cablecasting, would become subscribers. Thus, the cable operator would receive the additional revenue he needs to broaden the scope and the variety of his offerings, without having to increase his service rates or seek revenue from advertising. However, there is a trend toward a second source of funds for developing local programs. Recently, the Canadian Radio and Television Commission approved a request from a Calgary system to charge customers an additional 50 cents per month for this purpose.

The Davey Report provides detailed information on cable ownership patterns and valuable data on cable circulation. It is interesting to note that in the cabled areas, 41 percent of all households subscribe to the service. Estimates were also made of the cost of establishing a studio. For large systems (annual revenue of more than $400,000), the cost of initial equipment would range from $200,000 to $250,000; an additional $200,000 to $250,000 would be needed for salaries to cover a program and production staff of approximately 40 people. For middle-size systems (revenue from $200,000 to $400,000), the cost of initial equipment would be $90,000; an annual budget of $70,000 would be required for a staff of 10 to 12. The feasibility of local programming for smaller systems (revenue of less than $200,000) was questioned by the Committee.

With respect to the content of local programs, the Committee felt that there is a need for a policy whereby the cable operator would not be held responsible for every word when he granted access to the channel. This freer policy might encourage the development of more models like *Town Talk* in Thunder Bay, Ontario; and *Intercom* in Toronto. The groups concerned have suggested that, as community-based groups, they should carry part of the responsibility for programming on community channels.

Whereas the Davey Report does not deal directly with educational broadcasting, probably because of its minimal development in Canada, the amount of attention given to the phenomenon of cablecasting is significant. It is also encouraging, for as indicated in my previous column, cablecasting has endless implications for educational programming of a local nature in North American communities. ■

Vancouver's Channel 10: Creating a Community Identity

The expectation of more extensive programming by cable companies was reported thus by Canada's Special Senate Committee on Mass Media:

> CATV can assist in the development of community identity through locally produced programs; they can also assist provincial and local authorities in the development of educational services. They can participate in the enrichment of the community's cultural life through the distribution of Canadian-produced films, educational information and other films of particular interest produced for public showing but not normally available in that area. CATV local programming should complement rather than compete with programming already available to the community through television and commercial movie houses.

How does a new cable station with limited resources meet this challenge? Channel 10 in Vancouver, British Columbia, could serve as a case study. Known as "Your Community Service Channel," it has approximately 160,000 subscribers, a possible family audience of 384,000. Such figures confirm that the potential of cablecasting is beyond imagination. Some prophets foresee a big Service, with cable being used for selecting programs, shopping, banking, and for information retrieval.

The staff did much legwork before Channel 10 earned its reputation. Newspaper stories and advertisements, and speeches to service clubs and other community groups, gradually resulted in programming for prime TV time (7 p.m. to 11 p.m.), Monday through Friday. Many facets of the community are explored. Special interest groups, like the Canadian Diabetic Association, the Western Institute of the Deaf, and the British Columbia Heart Foundation have sought out Channel 10. So have institutions of higher learning, the Vancouver Art Gallery, and representatives of municipal, provincial, and federal governments. Often the telephone has provided two-way communication with viewers. Other participants include agencies like the National Film Board and the Alcoholism Foundation of British Columbia. Finally, non-credit adult education courses have appeared, such as Investment World and The Art of Making Wine. Commonly, Channel 10 invites groups to the studio for live or taped programs, or groups present their own films or video tapes. Sometimes, Channel 10 interviewers talk with members of little-known groups, to give them access to a large public audience.

The question naturally arises: How can members of the community help in designing programs that emphasize community concerns? Channel 10's answer has been to solicit advice from established groups, such as the British Columbia Branch of the Consumers' Association of Canada and Simon Fraser University. Channel 10 also provides time and technical help to groups who develop worthwhile programs. These could range from a discussion of the role of cable TV itself to the actual use of Channel 10 as a media workshop by students at the University of British Columbia and Simon Fraser University.

The model developed by Channel 10 admirably fulfills the objectives, stated earlier, of the Senate Committee. Other communities may seek other models such as a charter board, representing the different segments of society and responsible for ensuring that all citizens have access to the cable forum. Whatever model is used, it seems certain that cablecasting will remain continuously, and uniquely, responsive to community needs, whether as purveyor of information or catalyst. Its impact on the creation of a community identity could be formidable.

by John A. Niemi

Skid Row '71

"Ripples from a Pebble"

After reviewing with a class of graduate students in adult education some research on disadvantaged adults, I remarked that when working with them it might be more economical, in the long run, to establish new programs unrelated to present educational institutions than to revamp existing programs. One immediate ripple from this pebble was the proposal by a group of students to undertake, as their class assignments, an educational tv program on disadvantaged adults for the local cable station (Vancouver's Channel 10). The purpose of this assignment quickly became two-fold. As interviews proceeded with male alcoholics in Vancouver's Skid Row area and personnel from social agencies, the students acquired insights into an important social issue; and they perceived the need for specially designed adult education programs to enable the men to cope with their problems.

The ripples from the pebble widened as the students designed a tv program to make the public aware of this social issue. The hour-long program began with an orientation, lasting 12 minutes, to Skid Row via slides and a film accompanied by audio-taped interviews, a comentary and dubbed-in songs. Following the orientation, 18 minutes of interviews were held with two former alcoholics, one who had had little formal education and the other who had attended a university.

In the second half of the program, a live "hot line" panel appeared consisting of a student, the former alcoholic who had attended university and a social worker assigned to the Skid Row area. The ripples multiplied as the lively audience participation in the "hot line" came to the attention of representatives of certain social agencies. For these people requested the use of the videotape of the tv program for their in-service institutes. Further requests led to the making of a kinescope to be shown by agencies having a 16-mm. projector.

The ripples from the original pebble continued to multiply, as one student and the mother of a second student volunteered to teach two illiterates to read at the Salvation Army's Harbour Light Center. Also, the former alcoholic with a university background has been admitted to a Diploma course in Adult Education at the University of British Columbia. He plans to become an adult educator himself, so that he can develop programs to assist former alcoholics to resume their places in society. Furthermore, the Salvation Army's Harbour Light Center has sent to a government agency a request for funds for upgrading programs. These would enable the men to acquire the minimum prerequisites needed to prepare for a new trade or to cope with the problems of living in society today. Hopefully, this proposal will be accepted.

Thus it is that an idea which grew out of a class discussion spread, like the ripples of a pebble flung into the water. The outcome was not merely a stimulating tv program over the local cable station, but a pattern of community action. Though modest in scope, the pattern suggests a kind of microcosm of social change.

by John A. Niemi

Greenwich Cablevision: A British Experiment in Cablecasting

The recent return of 300 coupons to the *Greenwich Globe* by the citizens of that community, signals the keen public interest in the forthcoming Greenwich Cablevision experiment. These people were responding to an article which described the innovation and invited citizens to participate in producing local programs.

All this activity grew out of a decision by the Minister of Posts and Telecommunications to grant a license to Greenwich Cablevision for the transmission of locally originated television programs over the broadcast relay systems. The license is a "first" in Britain. Greenwich Cablevision is one of six experiments planned between now and 1976.

How did this local television network develop and why did it develop in the working-class borough of Woolwich, a short ten miles from central London? The cablevision company in Woolwich, like companies in other communities, had its genesis in a set rental and service scheme. This scheme began in 1963, when local television dealers banded together and made it possible for Woolwich to receive British television programs. Previously, reception had been very poor because of the borough's location in the shadow of a hill, and no BBC satellite station was planned in the immediate future.

The initial venture, which provided trouble-free viewing at modest cost, came under a consortium of British and Canadian interests in 1970. Subsequently, the number of cable subscribers in Woolwich rose from 5,000 to 13,000. In keeping with the progressive Canadian pattern of operation, the consortium seeks to enrich the service with locally produced programs. The intention is twofold: to involve the community in such a way that disconnects might be discouraged, if and when the BBC establishes a small transmitter to serve the community; and to keep pace with the state of the art worldwide. The consortium gained political support from the local member of Parliament, who believed that Greenwich Cablevision would provide a needed public forum. There will be no advertising on this service, the full cost of which will be borne by the cable owners, as in Canada.

What reaction can we expect from the usually cautious British to this pilot project? Certainly, the press will judge it for both content and technical quality. The present government, which views favorably the future of cable television, will also scrutinize the situation. Greenwich Television itself is bound to produce some interesting data. If the BBC satellite station is ever completed, we may hear about the effects that one or two hours of local programming will have on the number of subscribers and whether Greenwich Cablevision will be able to retain its working-class support -- on the basis of local programming.

What do British viewers expect? Local programs transmitted via cable loom more significantly in Britain than in North America. They supply a need not met by BBC 1, BBC 2 and ITV, whose programs are national in character. British viewers, accustomed to high standards, will expect quality and may be unusually critical of locally produced cable programs carrying news, drama, sporting events, political speeches, educational programs etc. The government, for its part, must realize that whereas the Greenwich experiment might serve as a model for another working-class community, it could be inappropriate for future systems serving a broader spectrum of British society. ■

by John A. Nieml

IV. EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS

Dilemma in the "Cool" Medium: ETV's Need for Evaluation

by JOHN A. NIEMI
Associate Professor and Acting Head
The University of British Columbia

Since a large proportion of adult education activities take place outside the classroom, Miller suggests that the adult educator has a responsibility to exploit, to the fullest extent, the potentialities of television.[1] In thinking about them, he must first of all be alert to the common misconception that television and education are synonymous. They are not. Television simply provides the educator with another channel of communication, to be used well or badly. According to Verner, television is "a means of extending the reach of a method to large audiences.[2]

How can the educator make the best use of television for his purposes? A necessary first step requires that he take an active and direct role, in co-operation with the skilled writer and cameraman, in designing programs and, subsequently, in evaluating them. The two processes go hand in hand; it is in the planning stage of a program, when objectives are being formulated, that provision must be made for evaluating those objectives at a later stage. Yet I am convinced, from reviewing educational programs on ETV, that all too often a communication "gap" exists between the educator and the media specialist. Here is the educator working on his own, sometimes planning a conventional lecture instead of exploiting the unique possibilities of TV for involving the viewer; and there is the media specialist working on his own and concerned about the technical aspects of the program. We can only speculate about the impact of this situation upon the programs, yet it is hard to escape the conclusion that their quality must be adversely affected. As Hilton Power has written:

> When you have two agencies co-operating – educational institutions and the mass media – in a common endeavor, the project itself is not always of sufficient concern to either party for them to be able to sustain the idea for very long. Each has a fear of the other party determining its objectives.[3]

Here, perhaps, lies part of the answer to the question why many ETV programs fail to attract wide audiences.

Not surprisingly, the communication gap between the educator and the media specialist may result in a neglect of the crucial matter of evaluating a course in terms of its worth to the viewer. Then the matter is left, by default, to the program administrator who, under the influence of practices followed by commercial television, tends to rely on quantitative means, i.e., the counting of heads. Such statistics have undoubted value. For example, Everly's study "Continuing Education Instruction Via the Mass Media" (1968) provides much insight into the number and kinds of ETV courses offered in more than 40 states to over a million participants. [4] Significantly, he reports that in only 11 of the 1,104 courses offered was there any proposal by the participants for evaluation as a means of improving the courses.[5]

Obviously, much greater emphasis must be given to *qualitative* means which seek to answer the question: How effective is teaching and learning by television? The answer will be found through further research among the participants, or viewers, *not* through the kind of research which compares a television lecture with a lecture in the usual college setting. Undoubtedly, such research often yields valuable data that makes it possible to utilize faculty members more effectively or to help them improve their presentations, for example, by having them pre-taped and appraised by the faculty and the

© 1969 by Acolyte Publications Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or part without written permission is strictly prohibited.

technical staff concerned. But a comparison of a television lecture with a conventional lecture commonly results in an analysis of the value of extending a linear type presentation outside of the classroom walls. The problem here is that the *multi-sensory nature of television* is overlooked. After all, the uniqueness of this "cool" medium, as McLuhan describes it, is that the viewer is involved and participating.[6] He further states that "because the low definition of TV insures a high degree of audience involvement, the most effective programs are those that present situations which consist of some process to be completed".[7]

This need to keep the student active, not passive, has been cogently stated by Schramm. TV should, he asserts,

> invite discovery on his part, rather than foreclose discovery by presenting all the answers. To do this, it has to be willing to stop talking and let the viewer take part; it has to stop telling him and listen to him; stop trying to fill his mind, and let him exercise his mind.[8]

Miller goes a step farther by stating flatly that the objective of ETV is not merely to involve the viewer but to effect "some well-defined change" in him.[9]

How many of our ETV courses can be said to involve the viewer? The research done by Everly on the stated objectives of more than a million such courses suggests that only a minority of them do so. He found that 68.2 per cent listed as their instructional objective the dispensing of information, 23.5 per cent the teaching of a skill, and 8.3 per cent the application of knowledge.[10] Indeed, the scant attention paid to audience involvement may provide a clue to the reason why so few adults watch educational programs on television. According to Johnstone and Rivera's study,[11] published in 1965:

> Although 25 million adults were estimated to have been active in one or another form of learning during the previous year, only 290,000 had followed a course of instruction on either commercial or non-commercial television, and only 1.5 per cent of all adult education courses reported had been studied by television.

Since I feel strongly that adult educators must become aware of the need for qualitative research, I designed a project for some of my graduate students in this field at the University of British Columbia. It may be of interest to note that twenty-four of them involved in a course entitled "Mass Media and Adult Education" included the director of nursing for one of the biggest hospitals in the province, the top administrator of a major public health organization, the personnel director for a large government agency, two program directors working with university extension services, and directors of adult education, administrators, and faculty members associated with several junior colleges. The twenty-four students were assigned the task of viewing one of the formal educational courses being offered through stations in British Columbia and the State of Washington. Most students watched commercial TV programs, while a few watched programs on Channel 9, the University of Washington's station. To guide the students in evaluating the courses, I gave them an instrument, or form, divided into two sections. The first section, "Objective Evaluation", involved listing such vital elements of program design as objectives, content, technique, supporting devices, supplementary materials, and studio techniques. The first section also related to the manner in which the program was administered, listing such topics as promotion, time of presentation, supporting The second section, "Subjective Evaluation", as the title implies, called upon the students to act as judges. They were asked to assess the impact of the program on the viewer with reference to the instructor's appearance, personality, knowledge of his subject, etc., and the supporting devices, studio techniques, supplementary material, ideas presented, and administration.

INSTRUMENT

1. Objective Evaluation

A. Program Design

1. Objectives of the course:
   - clarity of objectives
   - evaluation
2. Content:
   - area of specialty
   - appeal to adults
   - organization
     - summary of previous material
     - logical sequence of ideas
     - supporting evidence for generalizations
     - absence of irrelevant material, ambiguity, redundancy
   - pacing (rate of presentation)
     - pacing (rate of presentation)
3. Level for which program is designed
4. Technique (value and variety of presentation):
   - lecture
   - interview
   - panel
   - other
5. Supporting devices:
   - audio-visual aids
6. Supplementary material:
   - viewer's guides
   - syllabi
   - tests
   - personal experiences
   - other
7. Studio techniques:
   - quality of picture
   - lighting
   - audio
   - length of time camera focuses on other visual material

B. Administration (Decision Making)

1. Promotion of program
2. Time:
   - time of day
   - length of program

3. Supporting material and experiences

4. Evaluation of program

II. Subjective Evaluation

A. Effect of program on learner

1. Instructor:
   - appearance and mannerisms
   - personality
   - knowledge of subject
   - enthusiasm
   - alertness
   - diction
   - voice (tone, phrasing, pacing)
   - other
2. Supporting devices; studio techniques; supplementary material
3. Ideas – new ideas, new relationships between ideas
4. Administration of program
5. Other

FINDINGS

In discussing the design of programs which they observed, the students reported that course descriptions were presented in lieu of course objectives. In other words, the students were told what the course was about; they were not told "what the learner is to be like as a result of some learning experiences..."[12] This lack of explicit, behaviorally stated objectives sometimes resulted in the learner's becoming confused. He formed no clear idea about his own expectations from the course or even about whether he was supposed to be an active participant or a passive viewer. One explanation for this lack of specific objectives is that the programs were designed as survey courses. Because such courses cover a wide range of material in a relatively short time, it is often difficult to describe them in any but the most general terms. Hence, the promotional material outlines them as either adult education of an informal nature or as a series at the first year university level. For example, the announced objectives of an introductory course on urban planning ran something like this: "to give an overview of the forces which have created cities; the problems arising out of this dense pattern of settlement; the ways in which society has attempted to cope with these problems; and the impact of changing technologies."

The courses and each individual program varied as to the organization of content from well-structured presentations of ideas, developed in logical sequence, to presentations in which too many ideas were thrown haphazardly at the viewer and none of them were properly explicated. Most of the television teachers gave succinct summaries of material previously covered and a short synopsis of the program to be presented the following week. Pacing, or the rate of presentation, was consciously practised by instructors, except in a few cases where harried deliveries were made near the end of the program in an attempt to cover a certain amount of material. Such presentations resulted in a limited learning experience for the viewer, who did not have adequate time in which to reflect on the ideas being transmitted.

The lecture was the teaching technique most widely used in the programs that the students viewed. As might be expected, its effectiveness varied considerably from instructor to instructor. In presentations where he used audiovisual aids, the instructor was able to condense or to exemplify major ideas from a very broad subject area. In a few courses, additional reinforcement was provided by a viewing guide available for a nominal fee. Other teaching techniques used with some degree of success were the panel and the interview.

Studio techniques in most programs were outstanding. One student reported:

> It seemed as if the cameraman sensed that much depended upon him. During the dull lecturing, he kept some action going by shifting from closeup to long shot, from angle shot ot front view, from different views by many cameras to a sweeping, overall view by one camera.

In general, the students found that the quality of the picture, the lighting, and the audio were all conducive to pleasant viewing and interesting listening.

The promotion of the programs viewed was rather limited. Aside from the printed TV schedules included in the newspapers and TV guides, brochures were available upon request from the different stations, or, in the case of the University of Washington station, from an information center at the University. The promotion of supplemental material, e.g. viewers' guides and syllabi, was made both visually and verbally during station announcements, but they often appeared to have been recorded, since they bore little relation to the progress of the course. The first announcement, introducing the course, was repeated many times, so that a viewer tuning in late would gain the impression that the course was just beginning. There were no subsequent "spot" announcements to bring him up to date, by drawing attention to relevant pages in the guides or to particular assignments given by the instructor.

Most students were concerned about the restrictions put on their viewing of the program by inconvenient time schedules. The commercial TV programs offered at 6:30 a.m. placed a personal burden on the viewer, in that they interfered with the lives of other members of the household. With the programs offered through the ETV channel, this problem did not arise. They could be seen either in the evening or at midday or on a commercial channel at 7:00 a.m.

The students reacted favourably to Canadian Television's (CTV's) University of the Air series, because most of the programs consisted of five or six half-hour presentations – in other words, material was offered in small "packages" to meet certain needs of the viewer.

Finally, under "Objective Evaluation", the students reported that in none of the courses they watched was there any kind of evaluative device to measure the achievements of the viewer.

As mentioned previously, the purpose of the section entitled "Subjective Evaluation" was to try to assess the effect of the program on the viewer. Most students felt that the lecture technique, so frequently used, drew too much attention to the facial expressions and gestures of the teacher. One student reported that he often "found it more propitious to listen without looking", and attributed his attitude "to the lecturer's mannerisms, not to the technique of presentation". A comment by an another student implied that the medium and the technique of presentation magnified the effect of a lecturer's mannerisms:

> He was constantly concerned during the lecture sessions with finding a comfortable place for his hands and arms. The right he managed to keep relatively still by clutching the lectern. The left was constantly in and out of his coat pocket, except to turn his notes. He appeared to be constantly aware of being alone and very exposed to the viewer. I found it difficult to concentrate on his message, instead of his actions.

Concerning the personality of the teacher, the students' reports that an engaging personality had a positive effect on the viewers' interest in the subject confirmed McLuhan's view that "even teachers on TV seem to be endowed by the student audiences with a charismatic or mystic character that much exceeds the feelings developed in the classroom or lecture hall".[13]

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

A glance at the present state of ETV reveals a great need for qualitative evaluation on a continuing basis, if ETV is to fulfil its promise. To be sure, the students taking part in the U.B.C. study found some things to commend. Studio techniques including camera, lighting, visual aids, and audio were judged excellent; pacing, or the rate at which material is presented, was considered generally good; and Canadian Television's University of the Air won praise for its short presentations. But it seems painfully clear that many adult educators are failing to exploit to the fullest the potentialities of ETV as a multi-sensory medium with a unique capacity to involve the viewer. Too often, they are looking in McLuhan's rear-view mirror, when they assume that the kind of presentation which is appropriate for the classroom or the lecture hall is equally appropriate for the television screen.

In the first place, the educator requires the expertise of the media specialist, if he is to present his ideas in the most effective manner. Studio techniques can be crucial to the success or failure of the educator in getting his message across. There must be close co-operation then, between him and the media specialist, a pooling of knowledge and skills, in designing programs. The designing of programs calls for them to co-ordinate their efforts in determining course objectives and stating them in behavioral terms. Such planning not only gives the viewer a clear idea of what he can hope to gain from the course and a means of evaluating his own progress; it also gives him some indication of the role he is expected to play. If this role is to be that of an active participant, as prescribed by McLuhan, not a passive viewer, then the traditional lecture technique, which the U.B.C. students reported as the one most frequently used, must be drastically modified. Ways must be found to give the viewer an opportunity to ponder the ideas presented by the instructor, to argue issues with him, and to pursue those issues farther if the viewer wishes.

One way in which the viewer can be given an opportunity to ponder the ideas presented by the instructor is through pre-reading suggested in the syllabi and in the viewers' guides. The material should be organized in sequential steps and co-ordinated carefully with the ETV programs, so that the viewer knows in advance of each program the specific questions that will be raised and can prepare himself accordingly. In order that he might react to ideas put forward by the instructor, it is highly desirable to establish some form of communication between them. The viewer could submit his questions by mail to the instructor, or by telephone at some point in the program, or they could meet at weekly or bi-monthly seminars. Viewers could also form listening groups, which would send in questions of common interest. Finally, the viewer whose interest has been caught and who wants to continue his education should be supplied with bibliographies to guide his future study.

Concerning the evaluation of programs by the educator, he would have to go back to his course objectives and devise a questionnaire or an interview instrument to determine whether he had attained them. Here, he would probably need the help of a research team to test a random sample of the viewing population to find out, in behavioral terms, whether they understood certain concepts. For example, the course on urban planning referred to earlier might have included an objective like this one: Given a knowledge of the forces that created cities, the student should be able to discuss intelligently the factors that produced downtown Vancouver, and the factors perpetuating downtown and causing traffic congestion, and to suggest ways (e.g., the impact of technology) in which to explore solutions.

From the administrative point of view, the chief problems seem to be the timing and promotion of the programs. As mentioned above, the U.B.C. students reported on the inconvenience of the 6:30 a.m. schedule of the Vancouver station. Moreover, few adults would even know about the programs, since information in the form of a brochure or a flyer from the station was available only upon request. The station itself did not advertise the program, no notices appeared regularly in the newspapers, nor was any advice sent to educational institutions.

No doubt much more could be said about the changes required in order for ETV to best serve the needs of the mass audience. That these needs are real enough is proved by the burgeoning public interest in adult education programs of all kinds. Yet it must be remembered that the audience we are talking about is not receptive to the standard lecture technique so frequently employed by ETV. Indeed, the technique falls dismally short of exploiting the rare possibilities of the medium. Most disturbing of all, many educators seem unaware that they are not reaching this audience, because they have failed to provide for a systematic evaluation of the programs. Until it is provided, there seems little hope that the programs will show a progressive improvement, and learning will continue to take place by chance, not by intent.

REFERENCES

1. Harry L. Miller, *Teaching and Learning in Adult Education,* (New York: MacMillan, 1964, p. 283.
2. Coolie Verner and Alan Booth, *Adult Education,* (New York: The Center for Applied Research in Education, 1964), p. 85.
3. Letter to John Ohliger, quoted in *Listening Groups: Mass Media in Adult Education,* (Boston: Center for the Study of the Liberal Education for Adults, 1967), p. 78.
4. Jack C. Everly, "Continuing Education Instruction Via the Mass Media" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois, 1968), p. 233.
5. *Ibid,* p. 261.
6. Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man,* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1966), p. 311.
7. *Ibid,* p. 319.
8. Wilbur Schramm in a brief filed by the Ford Foundation to FCC, quoted in Jack C. Everly, "Continuing Education Instruction Via the Mass Media", (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois, 1968), p. 222.
9. Miller, *op. cit.,* p. 270.
10. Everly, *op. cit.,* p. 174.
11. John W.C. Johnston and Ramon J. Rivera, *(Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1965), p. 223.*
12. *Robert F. Mager, Preparing Instructional Objectives,* (Palo Alto, California: Fearon Publishers, 1962), p. 6.
13. McLuhan, *op. cit.,* p. 336.

TELEVISION: A VIABLE CHANNEL FOR EDUCATING ADULTS IN CULTURALLY DIFFERENT POVERTY GROUPS?--A LITERATURE REVIEW

John A. Niemi and Darrell V. Anderson

In seeking to answer the question whether television is a viable channel for educating adults in culturally different poverty groups, we must first examine the nature of those groups. The term "culturally different" is chosen in preference to the more general term "disadvantaged adults." For, as many writers point out, an actual culture of poverty exists, embracing many sub-cultures. Here, the concept of "culture" is borrowed in its traditional sense to mean groups of adults sharing a distinctive design for living (3) (13).* Among them are the urban poor, including ghetto dwellers like the Negro, the Mexican-American, and the new immigrant; and the so-called rural poor, like the people of Appalachia or the Indians on reservations.

Briefly, research in North America on adults inhabiting the poverty groups has differentiated them sharply from the dominant middle-class society by certain socio-economic factors and the attitudes which these engender (2). Rodman suggests that the life styles of many of these groups could be appropriately labelled the "lower-class value stretch." He means that they do not always abandon the general values of society, but generate an alternative set of values rationalized to their deprived circumstances. Thus, the concept of success as based on high income and educational attainment is stretched, so that a lesser degree of success finds acceptance. In effect, these groups display a wider range of values than others within society (19). It should be noted that some of the alternative values are at variance with those of the dominant middle-class society, e.g., the orientation of the middle class to mastery over Nature, versus the tendency of the poverty groups to stress immediate gratification. It was also found, in research done by Anderson and Niemi, that families in these groups entertained relatively narrow expectations which perpetuate the cycle of poverty. Such attitudes were often reinforced by discriminatory practices or outright rejection on the part of middle-class society. One result was that the poverty groups ascribed only limited value to education and showed limited aspirations for it. Moreover, these groups rejected the institutional structure of middle-class society in favor of intimate primary groups, often having close kinship ties (2).

What are some implications of the research findings for adult educators? Obviously, they must find ways to communicate with these isolated groups of adults and help them. The question then arises: Is television a viable channel? Certainly, television has in general proved to be an effective device for instruction (5) (16) (24). However, the value of the medium for reaching the poor cannot be so readily established. The reason is that research undertaken so far has been chiefly concerned with adults <u>in general</u>, rather than with illiterate adults (5). Even after surveying several literacy projects throughout the world, Schramm and his colleagues could find little information about the value of some television programs associated with those projects (23).

What has emerged quite clearly is that to be effective as an educational medium, television must be combined with techniques like listening groups that have volunteer teachers (4) (10) (18). Such programming calls for close co-operation between adult educators and media specialists. A difficulty involved here is described by Power:

*Numbers in parentheses refer to items in the bibliography beginning on page 12.

> "When you have two agencies co-operating - educational institutions and the mass media - in a common endeavor, the project itself is not always of sufficient concern to either party for them to be able to sustain the idea for very long. Each has fear of the other party determining its objectives" (17).

One successful attempt at bringing these two groups together is represented by the University of Maryland's Institute on Instructional Television and Adult Basic Education. Participants include ABE specialists - both teachers and administrators - and television specialists. Each group follows an accelerated course in the other's specialty. The ABE personnel enjoy a crash course in television, and the television specialists learn about adults in the poverty groups. Later, production groups are formed. The outcome of this Institute was that ABE personnel became enthusiastic promoters of television as a medium both for attracting disadvantaged adults and as a device for teaching them. The television specialists, in turn, became vividly aware of the plight of the poor and looked forward to designing programs for them in concert with the ABE personnel" (11).

Ideally, all television programs for culturally different poverty groups should include an evaluation design. Cleary explains why, in discussing the University of Wisconsin's Rural Family Development (RFD) Program:

> "A research project is a waste of time without evaluation: a project might consider itself completed, yet, without evaluation, there is nothing to say what is good about the project or what parts are bad and could be improved. Without evaluation, a project gives no guide lines to others following in their path, and others will not be able to make quick, accurate improvements. Evaluation is necessary for programs"(7).

Without evaluation, Niemi warns

> " ... it seems pairfully clear that many adult educators are failing to exploit to the fullest the potentialities of ETV as a multi-sensory medium with a unique capacity to involve the viewer. Too often, they are looking in McLuhan's rear-view mirror, when they assume that the kind of presentation which is appropriate for the classroom or the lecture hall is equally appropriate for the television screen" (15).

A survey of the literature reveals few research studies that formally evaluate television as a device for educating culturally different poverty groups. Therefore, it was decided to examine a number of representative programs directed to those groups, to see what could be learned about the viability of televisions as a channel for reaching them. The seventeen selected programs are summarized in three Tables: Table I, Program Identification; Table II, Administration of Programs; and Table III, Characteristics of Programs.

TABLE I - PROGRAM IDENTIFICATION

PROGRAM	TYPE OF PROGRAM	LOCATION	STATION	YEAR
1. Streamlined English I	Literacy	Memphis, Tenn. (WKNO-TV)	Commercial	1956
2. Streamlined English II	Literacy	Memphis, Tenn. (WKNO-TV)	Commercial	1958-59
3. Streamlined English	Literacy	Florence, Alabama (State of Alabama ETV Network)	Educational	1960
4. Learning to Read	Literacy	Baltimore, Md. (WBAL-TV)	Commercial	1960

TABLE I - CONTINUED

PROGRAM	TYPE OF PROGRAM	LOCATION	STATION	YEAR
5. PS # 4	Literacy	St. Louis, Mo. (KMOX-TV)	Commercial	
		(KETC-TV)	Educational	1960
6. Learn For Living	Literacy and English as a second language	Yakima, Wash. (WNDO-TV)	Commercial	1961
7. Let's Speak English	English as a second language	Toronto, Canada (CBCT)	Commercial	1961-62
8. Operation Alphabet	Literacy	Philadelphia, Pa. (WFIL-TV)	Commercial	1961
9. Operation Alphabet	Literacy	New York, N.Y. (WPIX-TV)	Commercial	1963
		(WNDT)	Educational	1963
		(WNYC)	Educational	1963
10. Operation Alphabet	Literacy	Shreveport, Louisiana (KSLA-TV)	Commercial	1963
11. Operation Alphabet	Literacy	State of Florida	Commercial & Educational	1963
12. Elementary English and Arithmetic	Literacy in English as a second language	Zambia	Closed circuit TV	1963-65
13. VTR St. Jacques	Community Development	Montreal, Canada	Closed circuit TV	1965
14. Operation Gap-Stop	Personal and Social Development	Denver, Colo. (KRMA)	Educational	1967
15. Cancion de la Raza ("Song of the People")	Personal and Social Development of Mexican-Americans	Los Angeles, Calif. (KCET)	Educational (UHF)	1968
16. Life Skills	Human and Social Development	Prince Albert, Saskatchewan	Closed circuit TV	1968-71
17. Rural Family Development (RFD)	Personal and Social Development of rural families	Madison, Wisc. (WHA-TV)	Educational (UHF)	1971

The seventeen programs appearing in chronological order in Table I fall into four categories: Literacy - eleven; English As A Second Language - one; Community Development - one; and Personal and Social Development - four. Table I illustrates a significant trend away from Literacy Programs toward more comprehensive programs on Personal and Social Development during the years 1956 to 1971.

TABLE II - ADMINISTRATION OF PROGRAMS

PROGRAM	PLANNING	PROMOTION	SCHEDULE DAY(S)	SCHEDULE TIME(S)	# and LENGTH OF PROGRAMS
1.	Developed by personnel at WKNO-TV in consultation with Frank Laubach.	TV station and community agency centers.	M-W-F	8 p.m.	42 half-hour programs
2.	As Above.	TV station and community agency centers.	M-W-F	8 p.m.	96 half-hour programs
3.	Florence State College.	TV station, personal contact, radio, newspapers, church announcements, and community groups.	M-W-F	8:30 p.m.	96 half-hour programs

TABLE II - CONTINUED

PROGRAM PLANNING	PROMOTION	SCHEDULE DAY(S)	TIME(S)	# AND LENGTH OF PROGRAMS
4. Reading specialists and supervisors of adult education.	TV station and supervisors of adult education.	Sat & SUN initially	8 a.p.	100 half-hour programs
5. Curriculum specialists and TV station personnel.	TV station & St. Louis Board of Education.		6:30 a.m. & 7:30 p.m.	18 months
6. TV teacher.	TV station and community organizations.	M thru F	6:30 a.m.	20 half-hour programs
7. CBC and Metropolitan Educational TV Association.	TV station, press including foreign language newspapers and brochures.	Sat & Sun W	12-12:30 p.m. 11:30 -12:00 p.m.	78 half-hour programs
8. School District of Philadelphia and Community organizations.	Advertising agency using posters, leaflets, flyers; also newspapers, radio, TV.	M thru F	6:30 a.m.	100 half-hour programs
9. Advisory Committee, consisting of union members and personnel from other community groups.	Advisory committee using flyers & posters distributed through community organizations; also, press.	M thru F	8:30a.m. 6:00p.m. 8:30p.m.	100 half-hour programs
10. Louisiana State Dept. of Education and Caddo Parish School Board.	School Board.	M thru F	7 a.m.	100 half-hour programs
11. Directors of adult education, state and local.	State-wide, using personnel from various organizations and TV stations.	M thru F		100 half-hour programs
12. University College of Rhodesia & Nyasaland.	Native employees of Rhokana Corp. who participated in study.			
13. St. Jacques Citizens Committee & National Film Board of Canada.	St. Jacques Citizens Committee			
14. School of Communication Arts, University of Denver.	University and TV station.	M thru F	12 p.m.& 6 p.m.	8 half-hour programs
15. KCET and community, through Ford Foundation grant.	Announcements - Spanish language media, various agencies, person to person, & sample episodes on video tape.	M thru F	3 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.	13 week series - 65 half-hour episodes

TABLE II - CONTINUED

PROGRAM PLANNING	PROMOTION	SCHEDULE DAY(S)	SCHEDULE TIME(S)	# AND LENGTH OF PROGRAMS
16. Staff, Saskatchewan Newstart Training Laboratory.	As for "Planning."			
17. University of Wisconsin RDF staff.	Extensive multimedia advertising in four counties.	M W Thurs. Sun.	8:30 a.m. 7:00 p.m. 3:30 p.m. 4:30 p.m.	52 half-hour programs

To adult educators and media specialists, the administrative decisions reflected in the planning, promotion, and scheduling of programs, as shown in Table II, are of paramount importance. The planning was of three types: organizational, originating with television stations, colleges, school boards, a private corporation, or national or state bodies; individual, originating with television teachers, directors of adult education, and curriculum specialists; and community, originating with citizens' committees or volunteer advisory boards.

Apparently, the most extensive promotion occured in Programs 3, 8, 9, 12, 15, and 17. Program 3 (Streamlined English, Florence, Ala.) used television, personal contact, radio, newspapers, church announcements, and community groups. Program 8 (Operation Alphabet, Philadelphia, Pa.) had newspaper, radio and television coverage and, in addition, hired an advertising agency to distribute posters, leaflets, and flyers. For Program 9 (Operation Alphabet, New York), an advisory committee directed a similar distribution. Program 12 (VTR St. Jacques, Montreal) was promoted through a special Citizens Committee, and Program 15 (Cancion de la Raza, Los Angeles) enlisted Spanish language media, various agencies, person to person contact, and sample episodes on video-tape. Finally, Program 17 (RFD, Wisconsin) relied on extensive multimedia advertising in four counties.

Concerning program times, several were offered very early in the morning or at 12:00 noon. Such times would undoubtedly discourage many viewers. Others would react negatively to a long series, such as programs running for 100 half-hours. Such planning runs counter to the evident preference of individuals in poverty groups for immediate or very quick satisfaction. The need is for programs to be designed in smaller "packages."

TABLE III - CHARACTERISTICS OF PROGRAMS

CONTENT	PROCEDURES	COMMUNITY ASSISTANTS	MATERIALS	EVALUATION
1. Based on Laubach's Streamlined English I Series.	Telecast to students at home & in community agency centers.	Volunteer teacher assistants at community centers.	Produced locally for students & volunteer teacher assistants.	
2. Vowel sounds and phonics approach developed by Laubach.	Commonplace adult situations "acted out" on telecast. Drill provided for viewers.		Workbooks for students.	Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT) - 61 showed average reading achievement 2.6 grades.

TABLE III - CONTINUED

CONTENT	PROCEDURES	COMMUNITY ASSISTANTS	MATERIALS	EVALUATIO
3. Kinescopes of content under 2, above.	Telecast to students at centers like schools & churches.	Volunteer teachers at centers.	Workbooks & locally developed materials for students	MAT-254 showed average reading achievement 2.5 grades in work knowledge & word discrimination.
4. Short story, with emphasis on word recognition, vocabulary development, reading comprehension.	Telecast to home audience by TV teacher-personality.		Mimeographed supplemental reading & practice sheets for students.	Based on practice sheets.
5. Association of 40-odd basic speech sounds with letters, using large drawings & nonsense lines. Informal discussion by teacher of timely topics.	Telecast to home audience by "host teacher" & others.		Supplementary self-help charts & practice sheets.	
6. Word recognition skills, by presentation of new words & a short story; also manuscript writing.	TV teacher used everyday situations familiar to students, talked informally with them, & sometimes included 3 or 4 of them as a "class."	Volunteer teachers trained to meet with viewing groups.	Supplemental materials available for practice, review, & self-help.	
7. Basic, everyday sentences, with emphasis on the sound qualities, rhythms, & pitch variations of English Sentences were translated into many languages.	TV teacher used conversational approach, dramatization, & pictures, & encouraged mimicry by viewers.		Textbook Let's Speak English.	Interviews with random sample of 1026 respondents and 368 serious viewers showed that program reached those who need it most.
8. New words, related to a three or four-sentence story based on everyday situations.	TV teacher presented material in manuscript on a large flip chart for four programs & reviewed material on fifth program.		Printed supplemental materials could be purchased for $3.50. Later available as a TV Home Study Book, with progress tests from NAPSAE, for $2.00.	
9. See 8 above.	See 8 above.		NAPSEA's TV HOME Study Book.	Final test used to

TABLE III - CONTINUED

	CONTENT	PROCEDURES	COMMUNITY ASSISTANTS	MATERIALS	EVALUATION
9.					identify individuals who had remained with series & achieved minimal literacy 2500 passed tests.
10.	See 8 above.	Research study: Group I (19)-TV program as in 8 above; Group II (23) TV program plus teacher presentations; Group III (36) -regular classroom program of literacy instruction.		See 8 Above.	Group I-only one student took a standardized test Group II-Standardized test showed average grade increase of 1.32. Group III-Standardized test showed average grade increase of 1.55.
11.	See 8 above.	See 8 above- supplemented by adult education classes. Research study involving 243 adults.	Directors of adult education & volunteer teachers.	See 8 above.	Gilmore Oral Reading Test revealed that 156 scored less that 3.0 (109 below 1.5) & only 87 scored above 3.0.
12.	Elementary English & Arithmetic.	Research Study: Group I-TV programs & follow-up by classroom teachers;Group 2-TV programs only; Group 3-classroom teaching only, by classroom teachers of Group 1; Group 4-regular classroom teaching only.		New Ship primers & workbooks; models, pictures, & puppets.	Educational Attainment Grading Tests showed gains in English & Arithmetic in all groups. No statistically significant differences in gains made by each group

TABLE III - CONTINUED

CONTENT	PROCEDURES	COMMUNITY ASSISTANTS	MATERIALS	EVALUATI
13. Community problems raised by citizens.	Citizens' Committee taped fellow citizens, & then held public meetings to view edited tapes on closed circuit & discuss problems.		VTR unit.	
14. Information about where to go for legal aid, how to budget, what to do in case of medical emergencies, etc.	Daytime serial format.			Follow-up interviews indicated that viewers liked programs & learned from them.
15. Thirteen major themes-problems relating to unemployment & job training, welfare, family roles, etc. "Open line" (telephone) questions of most interest were recorded for discussion on TV by experts.	Soap operas prepared by Mexican-Americans; also "open Line" service.			Personal interviews of 397; of 211 who viewed program, 68% watched in groups & 21% thought the programs helped them.
16. Information-giving, e.g., teaching of reading & arithmetic; personality development; social skills; job skills; community development.	Pre-taped lessons discussed in class, role-playing & simulated experiences.		Prepared video-tapes.	In process.
17. Practical skills regularly needed by rural adult, e.g. ordering from commercial catalogues, registering for Medicare; concomitant computation & communication skills.	Telecasts to homes, supplemented by non-graded home study materials.	Home visitors, whose function is to help students become independent learners.	Home study materials -nongraded.	In process.

1. Literacy Programs

On the basis of previous experience, early television programs prepared for adults in the poverty groups emphasized basic skills in language, reading, and simple arithmetic as a foundation for further vocational or social education. For example, Program 1 (Memphis, Tenn., 1956), the first American literacy campaign linked to television, drew on the consultative services of Laubach (4), and used his streamlined English I series. A unique characteristic of this early Program is the use of volunteer teacher assistants (some of them former illiterates) at 31 community centers. Program 2, a follow-up to 1, stressed vowel sounds and the phonics approach to reading developed by Laubach. In the situations that were "acted out," no one personality dominated, but several teachers took part. The drill provided for viewers consisted largely of work repetition.

Evaluation by means of the Metropolitan Achievement Test, administered to a group of 61 students, revealed average reading achievement of 2.6 grades (10). An average of 2.5 grades was reported by Peerson for the 254 individuals who completed Program 3 (Florence, Alabama, 1960), after viewing kinescopes of Program 2 (18). It is of interest to note that 608 enrolled in the Alabama program at the start, out of 105,310 functional illiterates in the broadcast area. This same series was also telecast in North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia (2) (5) (10).

Two other literacy programs developed in the early 1960's were reported by Cass (5). Program 4 (Learning to Read, Baltimore, Md., 1960) had a potential audience in four states and in Washington, D.C. Completed practice sheets returned by persons, who received certificates, constituted the only feedback. For Program 5 (PS #4, St. Louis, Mo., 1960), some feedback was probably provided by viewers who were invited to a party to meet their television teachers. The 60 viewers who attended subsequently helped to publicize the series for others who might benefit from it.

Literacy Programs 8, 9, 10, and 11 are studies of four attempts to utilize the material known as Operation Alphabet. This project, Program 8, was begun by the Division of School Extension of the School District of Philadelphia in 1959, with the help of many community organizations, and telecast for the first time in 1961. It was expected that a conscientious adult learner could reach approximately third grade level in reading and writing after completing 100 lessons. An estimated 50-75,000 people benefited from the Program, judging from letters expressing appreciation and requesting a re-run of the series; from the number of sets of materials delivered; from 2,500 test letters corrected and returned; and from an increase of 25% in adult enrollments in basic education classes in the public schools. The apparent interest shown in the Philadelphia venture caused NAPSAE to obtain the copyright for both the television series and the supplementary materials. NAPSAE also developed a guide specifying steps to be taken by communities to promote the series.

For Program 9 (New York, 1963), the advisory committee which planned the program used the NAPSAE guidelines for Operation Alphabet. Completed tests returned by persons, who received certificates, provided the only feedback (5). Program 10 (Shreveport, La., 1963) involved a research study conducted by the Caddo Parish School Board, in cooperation with the Adult Education Section of the State Department of Education. Participants were evaluated by standardized tests (1). Program 11 (Florida, 1963) was also a research study, in which 243 adults were evaluated by the Gilmore Oral Reading Test. One explanation why so few of them reached the third grade reading level, as anticipated, is explained by Bunger; she points out that most students stopped watching the program regularly after the twentieth lesson. She also discovered that adults who had studied in groups achieved significantly higher scores than those who had studied individually. Contrary to the Philadelphia venture, Bunger found that the telecast did not seem to affect enrollments of adults in public school adult literacy classes (4).

In concluding this discussion of Operation Alphabet, it must be said that although many cities repeated the series several times, little accurate assessment was made of its impact, because of a lack of funds for record-keeping and research. In short, the considerable claims advanced for the success of the series in the United States have been based chiefly upon television station ratings, not on any kind of formal evaluation (4) (5).

Two literacy programs remain to be discussed. One of them, 6 (Learn for Living, Yakima, 1961), addressed two audiences, the adult illiterate and the foreign-born adult. Thus, it combined a literacy program with instruction in English as a second

language (5). The second program, 12 (Elementary English and Arithmetic) was conducted in Zambia in 1963-65. It is included because it is a research study aimed at judging the efficacy of television for teaching literacy in English as a second language to adult. The individuals in the four groups, drawn from all over Central Africa, were matched on English and Arithmetic attainment, non-verbal ability, and formal education. The television programs, beamed to Groups 1 and 2, emphasized a visual approach whenever new material appeared, along with miming and dramatization by actors. As dialogue between teacher and student was considered the key to learning a second language, a unique approach was used with Group 2. The television teacher would pose questions to the viewers, each one being identified by a number from 1 through 20. As the television teacher could not hear the answers, they were checked out by the classroom teacher and the students themselves. The classroom teacher then advised the television teacher of any difficulties. Although Group 3 had classroom teaching only, their instruction came from the same teachers who had followed up the television programs with Group 1 and who had access to all the television materials. As Table III indicates, Group 4 had instruction from regular classroom teachers without reference to television.

Although the results showed no statistically significant differences in the gains made by each of the four groups, it appeared that Group 3 experienced one of the most effective methods of teaching english as a second language. However, it must be added that this same Group was considered to be more highly motivated than the other Groups, because their attendance in this class formed part of their training as mechanics (8).

2. English As A Second Language Program

Program 7 (Let's Speak English, Toronto, Canada, 1961-62) relied for feedback partly on 1026 respondents randomly selected from a telephone survey of some 10,000 households, and partly on 368 "serious" viewers who had sought more information from CBC about the program. From the 1026 respondents, descriptive data were gathered about audience characteristics such as language background, proficiency in English, and level of education. It was found that those adults with the lowest proficiency in English persisted with the program; in other words, it reached those who needed it most. A high proportion of the persistent viewers were immigrants who had come since 1956. It was also found that lack of formal education was not a deterrent to viewing the first place, or a crucial factor in determining whether a person stayed with the course or watched only casually. The 368 "serious" viewers had the highest degree of involvement in the program. Analysis of the data gathered during interviewes indicated little resistance on their part to the mimicry approach. Of this group, 334 gave information about their viewing habits. It revealed that those who watched the program in groups tended to be more regular viewers than those who watched it alone (12).

3. Community Development Program

Program 13 (VTR St. Jacques, Montreal, 1965) involved the use of closed circuit television by a Citizens Committee to stimulate social action in the poor district of downtown Montreal. The Committee was given the use of a 1/2" video tape recording (VTR) unit by the National Film Board of Canada. Through this medium, people were encouraged to voice their problems. Later, when viewing the tapes on closed-circuit television at public meetings, neighbours recognized common problems and began to seek solutions. One project attributed to the efforts of the Citizens Committee was the establishment of a Citizens Community Health Centre, which is still operating (27).

4. Personal and Social Development Programs

Programs 14, 15, 16, and 17 all relate to personal and social development. Program

14 (Operation Gap-stop, Denver, 1967) emerged in response to the needs of 649 heads of household interviewed in an urban housing development. To interest people in watching the programs, four motivational conditions were set up: no contact, the interview contact, pamphlets, and money. It was found that the paid viewers watched the largest number of programs. Evaluation was based on follow-up interviews, which revealed favourable attitudes on the part of viewers (25).

Program 15 (Cancion de la Raza, Los Angeles, 1968) catered to the needs of Mexican-Americans under a grant of $625,000 from the Ford Foundation. Through the "soap opera," messages of social adjustment were presented in the context of a barrio family. The telephone "open line" (Linea Abierta) to the television station not only gave feedback to individual viewers, but provided actual content for a panel of community experts, who discussed the most relevant questions submitted. Further feedback was sought through telephone surveys to determine viewer reactions during the airing of programs. It was reassuring to find that the objective of making the programs seem credible was apparently achieved. In two telephone surveys, over 60 per cent believed that most of what they saw was true, and 30 per cent believed in part of it. Over two-thirds of the viewers thought they had learned something about the problems presented. But the most significant finding was that many viewers were taking actions which they would not ordinarily have taken. The major purpose of the Program - to assess the effects of information input via the soap opera upon attitudes and behaviours - was evaluated in interviews mentioned the emphasis placed upon education. An increased knowledge of community and a modification of complacent attitudes was thought to be reflected in the claim of 4 out of 10 viewers that they were considering joining community, social and political organizations (25).

Program 16 (Life Skills, NewStart, Saskatchewan, 1968-71) presently emphasizes applied problem-solving. Evaluation of the Program has been an on-going process. The value of the video-tape recording unit (VTR) has been recognized as affording students and coaches opportunities to practise life skills and to receive immediate feedback. In their progress through the course, the students engage in more complex case studies and role plays which are designed to test the skills they are learning; again, the VTR permits them to observe their progress to date. So far, Saskatchewan NewStart has used VTR continuously for more than two years with over 200 students (20) (21).

The most significant characteristic of Program 17 (RFD, Wisconsin, 1971) is the innovative home visit, added to the well-established combination of television and supplementary home study materials. The content, oriented to the problems and needs of the rural farm families, is unique in the sense that the wide variety of needs has necessitated abandoning the traditional scope and sequence of such programs. The value of this approach is that the Wisconsin Program is geared to a "drop-in" rate, instead of a "drop-out" rate. As RFD is a field study, its evaluation will aim at producing information related to applied decision-making. It is hoped that the home visitor will obtain data, through special achievement tests, concerning an individual's ability to cope with the problems. Attitude measures will be used to evaluate his self-concept, his attitude toward learning, and his sense of control over his environment (7) (14).

Summary

Possibly the most significant finding in the analysis of the seventeen programs has been the dearth of adequate instruments for gathering data. Instead of developing research instruments specifically for evaluating the unique contribution of television to the education of adults in poverty groups, some program planners have relied on tests designed for use in formal classroom situations. As a result, few programs had adequate research designs for collecting data about behavioural change. However, in the literacy programs, there is some evidence that television alone is less effective in its results than instruction by a conventional classroom teacher. It may well be that the impersonal and mass nature of television runs counter to many basic values of the poverty groups.

As yet, this crucial matter has received scant attention from the programmers. Another major problem has been the dual attempt to obtain data, simultaneously, on the appropriateness of the programs as a whole and on the achievements of individuals. The first task, of reaching audiences, is one in which the media specialists have expertise; the other, behavioral change, is the province of the educator. Finally, the importance of [illegible] must be taken into account, as they relate to both days and times, and so must the need to package programs into smaller units.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

(1) "A Comparative Study in Basic Adult Education Conducted by Television Teacher - TV Combination and Teacher Alone without TV." Baton Rouge: Adult Education Section, Louisiana State Department of Education and the Caddo Parish School Board, July 6, 1964.

(2) Anderson, D.V., and J.A. Niemi. Adult Education and the Disadvantaged Adult. Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University, November 1970.

(3) Bagdikian, B.H. In The Midst of Plenty: A New Report On The Poor In America. Baltimore, 1966.

(4) Bunger, M. "A Descriptive Study of Operation Alphabet in Florida and an Evaluation of Certain Procedures Employed." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Florida State University, 1964.

(5) Cass, A.W. "The Role of Television in Reaching Illiterate Adults With A Literacy Program Series." Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, Teachers' College, Columbia University, 1969.

(6) Cass, A.W. "The Use of Television in Literacy Programmes in the U.S.A." in Literacy Discussion, 1:19, Spring 1970.

(7) Cleary, A.T. "The Evaluation Design For RFD" in RFD Newsletter. Madison: University of Wisconsin, February, 1971.

(8) Cripwell, K.R. Teaching Adults By Television. A Report Of An Experiment In The Teaching Of Elementary English And Arithmetic To Adult Africans On The Cooper Belt, Zambia. 1963-1965. Salisbury: University College of Rhodesia, 1966.

(9) Educational Television For Farmers: A Study of Audience Reactions To A Televised Course of Instruction For Farmers in Manitoba. Ottawa: Research Department, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, September, 1962.

(10) Foley, J. Summary Of The Literacy Project: WKNO-TV. Memphis: Memphis State University, 1959.

(11) Kinkley, O.H. "ITV: Approach To Basic Adult Education." Educational/Instructional Broadcasting, January, 1970, pp.13-19.

(12) "Let's Speak English," An Experiment In Adult Educational TV Designed To Teach English To Beginners, With A Report On The Audience Reached and Its Reactions To The Program. Ottawa: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, June, 1967.

(13) Lewis, Oscar. "The Culture of Poverty," The Scientific American. October, 1966.

(14) "New Rural Adult Basic Education Project Underway At University of Wisconsin," in RFD Newsletter. Madison: University of Wisconsin, July, 1969.

(15) Niemi, John A. "Dilemma In The 'Cool' Medium: ETV's Need For Evaluation", Educational/Instructional Broadcasting, October 1969, pp. 15-18.

(16) Ohliger, J. The Mass Media In Adult Education: A Review of Recent Literature. Syracuse, N.Y.: ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult Education, November, 1968.

(17) Ohliger, J. Listening Groups: Mass Media in Adult Education. Boston: CSLEA, 1967

(18) Pearson, N. An Experiment With Evaluation In The Eradication of Adult Illiteracy by Use Of Television Instruction Over A State Educational Television Network Supplemented by Supervised Group Viewing and by Related Use of Project - Supplied Materials of Instruction. Florence, Alabama: Florence State College, 1961.

(19) Rodman, H. "The Lower-Class Value Stretch," in Social Forces, 42: 205, December, 1963.

(20) Saskatchewan Newstart. Video Tape Play Back in Programs of Human And Social Development. Prince Albert, Saskatchewan: Saskatchewan Newstart, 1970.

(21) Saskatchewan Newstart. Life Skills: A Course in Applied Problem Solving. Prince Albert, Saskatchewan: Saskatchewan Newstart, 1971.

(22) Schenkkan, R.F. and W.J. Millard, Jr. Television As An Instrument For The Continuing Education of Spanish Speaking Families. Austin: University of Texas Radio/TV/Film, 1965.

(23) Schramm, W. and others. The New Media: Memo To Educational Planners. Paris: UNESCO, 1967.

(24) Schramm, W. "What We Know About Learning From Instructional Television," in Educational Television: The Next Ten Years. Stanford: Stanford University, The Institute For Communication Research, 1962.

(25) Scott, R.S. and C.R. Allen. "Cancion de La Raza: An ETV Soap Opera" in TV Quarterly, Fall, 1969.

(26) Torkelson, G.M. Educational Media. Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 1968.

(27) "VTR St. Jacques: Challenge For Change Program" Montreal: National Film Board of Canada.

IF YOU NEED HELP IN LOCATING ANY OF THE ABOVE MENTIONED ITEMS WRITE TO DR. JOHN NIEMI, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ADULT EDUCATION, FACULTY OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, VANCOUVER 8, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA.

V. NEW VISTAS

The Open University: Influence on North America?

As recently as 1967, Great Britain's Open University was a mere idea which had appeared in a government white paper entitled, "University of the Air." Subsequently, a planning committee met to work out a comprehensive scheme. In May 1969, this plan became a reality with the granting of a Royal Charter. The first students began working on their degrees in January 1971. Now, in June 1973, the Open University has had its first graduation ceremony (involving more than 800 graduates), and some of the early criticisms directed at education via the "telly" have subsided.

The Open University is a phenomenon of the media age. To be sure, its components include the established elements of individualized learning, correspondence texts, auxiliary materials and required assignments. In addition, study centers and residential summer schools provide help and guidance to the home learner. But the *new* feature of the Open University is the combining of those elements with TV and radio broadcasts. Programs via these media are transmitted twice – once during the week and again at the weekend. The TV programs are 25 min in length, while the radio programs last for 20 min. The policy of the Open University is to use the broadcasts as supplements to certain courses. The wide range of these programs results in an unusual learning experience not only for students of the Open University, but also for others who are not enrolled in it. Although there is no way of determining this spin-off audience, the high sale of Open University materials to nonstudents is one factor supporting its role as a catalyst in society.

To academics, the Open University has demonstrated the possibilities of radio and TV for educating large audiences. How was all this accomplished? Apparently one of my real concerns (expressed in previous columns) has been overcome, namely the seeming inability of the academic and broadcaster to cooperate in designing educational programs. In the United Kingdom, the Open University furnishes us with a striking model of such a partnership. It has enabled BBC production teams to develop the TV and radio components of the courses with the course teams, which include the academics along with other individuals responsible for the non-broadcast media materials. This team approach has brought about a greater appreciation of each other's expertise and has resulted in the translation of educational ideas into media programs.

Is there anything which we in North America might gain from this experience? All over the continent, supporters of an alternative type of higher education are hailing the concept of the Open University. In order to determine the effectiveness of the materials and the efficiency of the procedures for using them, four American universities agreed in September 1972 to participate in a one-year trial of using the Open University materials. The participating universities are Rutgers, the University of Maryland, the University of Houston and California State University (San Diego). These programs will be evaluated for the College Entrance Examination Board by the Education Testing Service of Princeton, N.J. While it is too early to predict the impact of the infant Open University on North American education, we can speculate that the ideas so fruitfully explored and practiced in Great Britain will gain increasing attention here as time goes on. ■

by John A. Niemi

...On "Hot Line"

Today, the governments of both the United States and Canada face complex social issues which, if they remain unresolved, could lead to revolution. The situation could perhaps be helped by devising educational programs for radio broadcasting. It may sound strange to turn to radio, which, in the dazzling light of the tv screen, has often been shoved aside as an anachronism. Yet there are signs of renewed audience interest in such programs as "Talk Shows," where listeners are encouraged to telephone their "Hot Line" host. On radio, these talk shows have the advantage of being available to anyone anywhere, even while driving his car. Also, they are "local," and they appeal to individuals in all conditions and all walks of life: the shut-in, the professor, members of minority groups, etc. To their host, they can unburden their hopes, their frustrations and their opinions on current issues. In short, the talk show is unstructured and, to many people, "entertainment."

While this unstructured approach has merit, there is a danger that superficial exchanges of views on complex issues could further polarize individuals in an already polarized society. If these issues are to be fairly dealt with, they need an educational emphasis, and it is here that we could exploit the full potential of the talk show in this decade. One immediate step could be the joining of forces by the educator and the broadcaster. The educator would benefit from the experience of the talk show host, who provides a public forum for alienated people and others, and whose "style" encourages them to respond. And the talk show host could benefit from the educator's knowledge of the adult learner, the educational process and the availability of both human and material resources. Together, the educator and the broadcaster could formulate a *purpose* for locally designed radio programs, to guide the adult who might otherwise become confused by a heavy input of opinion and misinformation.

For example, if a vote is pending on an important school bond issue, a purpose of the talk show would be to present the arguments pro and con. The talk show host could go beyond the question-answer technique to use the panel, the socio-drama and the lecture, thus making the program an actual learning experience, instead of merely a "beef box." And the educator might find it easier to recruit other community personnel for the program, e.g., agencies might supply booklets on drug addiction or parent education, libraries might suggest books and periodicals which present both sides of an issue, the local college or high school might contribute staff or facilities.

Now is the time for the educator to "opt in" and rediscover the potential of radio in the current decade. A union between him and the broadcaster could bring responsible local programming, enabling adults in their turn to rediscover an almost forgotten concept of "community"—that of a town meeting, conducted in this case via the radio and the telephone. ■

by John A. Niemi

Saskatchewan NewStart – Life Skills and VTR

The Life Skills Course at Saskatchewan NewStart (a joint venture of that Province and the Federal Government of Canada) relies heavily on VTR for the training or retraining of unemployed adults. These adults, who are frequently characterized as "under-educated," "disadvantaged," or "illiterate," belong to many culturally different poverty groups. Often, they have been rendered unemployable by the demands of a technological age.

The basic philosophy of Saskatchewan NewStart, located at Prince Albert, is that the task of educating these adults encompasses much more than a minimal program of reading, writing and computation. Instead, these skills are viewed as a foundation for life skills considered vitally necessary if individuals are to function effectively in their jobs and, in general, to live equably with their fellows.

In the Life Skills Course, students follow a planned sequence of experiences in five basic areas: self, family, leisure, community and job. For example, they learn the social skills required for satisfactory family living, for constructive interaction with community agents such as police, and for success on the job or when working as a team with friends. In all these activities, VTR plays a crucial role. Observing himself on video tape, the individual analyzes how he functions in a group, including the impact he makes on it, and he begins to understand his relationships with others. Hopefully, he gains insights into his own attitudes that inhibit communication and co-operation. The continuous nature of the feedback allows him to study his behavior at various stages and to chart his progress. No doubt some of these adult students will react strongly to non-verbal cues, a familiar form of communication because of the students' restricted verbal facility.

As he progresses through the Course, the student encounters more complex role plays and case studies designed to test the skills he is acquiring. Always, VTR gives him feedback. In addition, VTR helps the staff to evaluate their performance and to upgrade it.

VTR is also useful for applied problem-solving as it relates to personal business. Video tapes, followed by discussion, demonstrate how to open a bank account and how to buy a travel ticket or a money order.

In the Life Skills Course, as in any teaching-learning situation, there are potential problems. One might be the inclination of the staff to proceed too quickly or to expect the students, overnight, to surrender deeply rooted habits of thinking and acting. Another problem is providing professional help for the occasional student who finds the new experiences traumatic. The Saskatchewan NewStart people are keenly aware of these problems, as they carry out their imaginative program, one that has attracted wide attention in other parts of Canada and in the United States. It is too early to assess the full impact. I have no doubt that in taking maximum advantage of VTR as a training tool, Saskatchewan NewStart has made a distinctive contribution to adult education.

by John A. Niemi

Eskimos and film— film
the making of a position ~~paper~~

How can rural Alaskans participate in the process of decision-making which affects their well-being? With the awakening of the north, this is a key question that cannot be dismissed lightly. The two factors, culture and geography, which have formed the basis of operating assumptions in the past, now must be reviewed.

An exciting approach to this process has been developed by the Skyriver Project, a federally funded project that relies on film and video tape to present a community's view of an important issue. In deciding to use these media as tools for community involvement, the Skyriver Project drew its inspiration from Challenge for Change, a program of the National Film Board of Canada.

Initially, Skyriver has undertaken the major part of its work in the Eskimo village of Emmonak, located on the lower Yukon, a scant six miles from the Bering Sea. To the 500 residents of this remote village, the media have meant the attainment of two objectives. First, the media have given the people of the community a tool to use in approaching the difficult task of problem-solving. To discover what issues are close to the hearts of the villagers, a community developer chosen by them leads discussions, conducts interviews on films and disseminates the information to the people. When the issues have been identified, selected individuals or groups voice their opinions and offer solutions, and the sessions are filmed or taped. Later, the people involved in the interviewing edit the film in private, until they feel that it fairly represents their ideas.

The edited film or tape is then viewed by the general community, so as to provoke discussion. Here is the crucial point in the process, the moment when the community learns where individuals stand on vital issues. When a consensus has been arrived at, a film or video tape is made to record the official position of the village.

The second objective of the "position film" is to communicate the needs of rural Alaskans to government agencies who formulate policies. In the past, these policies were frequently made in an autocratic manner and based on incomplete or misleading information. Government officials, in their turn, are given the opportunity to present their side on video tape to the villagers, resulting in further dialogue among them. However, the usual response by government officials is to go directly to the people and talk with them.

What have been some of the results at Emmonak? First, it has its own local community developer and its own camera and film. The villagers have experienced the process of film-making and now appreciate its importance as a means of identifying issues and getting community opinion and support. Some of the issues on which the community developed a "position film" are the boarding school program, the food stamp program, housing projects and land claims. As an example of the kind of social action that ensued, one film caused the Department of Education to review its policy of supporting boarding schools over regional high schools. As the use of media in this fashion spreads, it is certain that more "position films" will be forthcoming from native peoples in Alaska and elsewhere. ■

by John A. Niemi

Video Cassettes and Software: Two Strategies

So-called futurists have pointed to numerous implications arising out of the video cassette revolution. This phenomenon, which lets the viewer select programs from a "bank" at a flick of his wrist, will grow and change with the continued refinements of technology. A major problem that plagues our futurists is how to develop "software" to meet the expectations of both viewer and educator.

Without appropriate software, the danger exists that the hardware will dominate the scene, becoming an end in itself instead of a means. What strategies could be employed to prevent this happening? Here, I would like to explore two that focus attention on training more people in the intelligent planning of learning experiences for the visual medium. Both strategies involve a systems approach designed to give professionals and paraprofessionals certain insights into the knowledge, skills and attitudes essential for the task.

The professionals referred to may be educators or producers (media specialists), and the task is to provide the setting and the experiences which will enable each group to become better acquainted with problems besetting the other. Educators would come to appreciate the difficulties involved in designing and producing programs, e.g., scripting, lighting, casting and studio techniques; while producers would realize the complexities of the teacher-learner transaction, e.g., setting meaningful objectives, selecting appropriate techniques, pacing material, etc. Successful attempts to foster such mutual understanding and cooperation have been made at Summer Institutes on Instructional Television and Adult Education at the University of Maryland. There, adult educators have learned much about TV as a teaching device, and TV experts have become aware of issues affecting students, administrators and teachers in adult basic education programs. Both groups have put their new insights to work in a systems approach to designing programs. Such collaboration, which could happen through workshops, institutes and short courses, is invaluable as a first step toward bringing together the two groups most vitally concerned with the video cassette medium. But much remains to be done. We must organize, at both graduate and undergraduate levels, courses which would have the avowed aim of stimulating educators and producers to develop jointly, a rationale and *modus operandi* based upon the expectations and needs of the learners.

The second strategy I have in mind — that of involving para-professionals — has possibilities yet to be clarified and amplified. I refer, of course, to training laymen to use the VTR. Such training could take place in community development programs, with the community as a workshop for para-professionals. Should anyone doubt the potential of such training, he has only to examine the National Film Board of Canada's Challenge for Change programs.

Upon acquiring such experience, paraprofessionals would unite with community groups to put together programs with and for local cable operators or even PTV stations — programs that are not available through national networks. The emphasis which many stations are placing on community programs, featuring local issues, demands services of trained personnel.

My plan is, then, that we match our enthusiasm for the hardware called video cassettes with an equally vital interest in the software. Is something wrong with our priorities when we train people meticulously to use a machine, but neglect to train others to design effective programs? ■

by John A. Niemi